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TENNESSEE COUNTY HISTORY SERIES

Grundy County



by James L. Nicholson

Robert E. Corlew

Editor



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DEDICATED TO

WILLIAM RAY TURNER
Friend and colleague;
avid collector of the Grundiana which
has been indispensable to this history

WILLIAM HENRY NUNLEY
Friend and colleague,
whose painstaking researches into the
Grundy County past have added much to this narrative

MARGARET BROWN COPPINGER
A valued friend,
who has shared all the historical treasures
of her beloved Beersheba Springs

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ISABEL HOWELL
A gentlewoman and a scholar,
archivist and first professional
historian of Grundy County

DONALD DAVIDSON
Revered teacher,
whose love of the Tennessee past and
of fine writing inspired any merit
this history may be judged to possess

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James L. (Jim) Nicholson
Tanglewood Farm
Kirksville, Kentucky
February 19, 1982

Preface

"We are mountain people," declares a verse of Leonard Tate, native poet of Grundy County, Tennessee. It is so: a mostly highland place has bred up a mountain people. Except along its fringes to the west and northwest where the tableland falls away into V-shaped coves, widening to valleys in a place or two, Grundy County is situated on the Cumberland Plateau. Its people in historic times have developed those traits and practiced those customs which perceptive observers have described as characteristic of the Southern highlander. To the outsider's glance these people appear, borrowing again from Mr. Tate, "... a boorish set, ... / Hard-bitten, coarse of feature and of speech, / Shallow and brawling as the mountain streams, / With morale friable as our sandstone." The poet knows, though, that there are depths to the local character that a mere glance cannot plumb; it is what the casual observer does not see that he feels impelled to proclaim. He avers, "All my life I have wanted to tell them: / That we are mountain people, / That mountain streams have pools of deep quietness, / And that beneath the sandstone of our hills / There is granite."

Character of whatever sort is the wellspring of human action, and action provides the grist of history. The particular makeup of traits which has been observed in the native Grundy Countian

raises expectations that he is someone with a propensity for robust action and that, as a people, Grundy Countians are likely to have produced a lively history. In this they do not disappoint the student of their place. The history of Grundy County, Tennessee, is an eventful story indeed, as we shall see.



GRUNDY County lies betwixt and between East and Middle Tennessee. It obtains much of its daily news from the newspapers and television stations of Chattanooga, a city of East Tennessee, which also is a magnet for contemporary weekend shoppers and entertainment seekers. However, the south of the county spends much of its money in Winchester and the north does the same in McMinnville, each a town of Middle Tennessee. It was much the same in railroad days. When an excursionist from the plateau stepped down from the “Mountain Goat” at the Cowan depot, he might change to a Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis train bound for Nashville or one for Chattanooga.

Thus a matter seemingly so elementary as stating in which of the three geographic regions of the state Grundy County lies proves not so simple. Is it in the extreme southwest of East Tennessee? Or the extreme southeast of Middle Tennessee? Only of the scant lowlands can we give an answer which few will dispute. Pelham Valley in the west, Hubbard’s Cove in the northwest, and Collins River Valley in the north are part of Middle Tennessee.

Perhaps this little geographic puzzle enlightens an essential truth about Grundy County. Query its residents on the subject, and few of them will declare themselves to be either East Tennesseans or Middle Tennesseans. They will allow only to being Grundy Countians; theirs has been a world much unto itself.

As a surveyed and bounded place on earth, this world began to take shape on May 1, 1844. Its geographic birthplace was the center of the Winchester to McMinnville stage road, where it intersected the line dividing the counties of Coffee and Warren. Nearby today is the Warren County town of Viola. From this point, the present northwest corner of Grundy County, surveyors ran a southerly line which cut away from Coffee County its southeast territory—land which had been part of Franklin County from 1807 until Coffee was organized in 1836. It consisted of present Hubbard's Cove, Burrows (today often spelled Burroughs) Cove, and Pelham Valley, along with mountain land lying eastward, which included the headwaters of Elk River.

Five days later, on May 6, surveyors met again where the stage road crossed the county line. This time they took an eastward reading and ran a line dividing newborn Grundy County from Warren. This netted Grundy an extremity of Warren County which on old maps forms a bulge to the southeast. It is a tract considerably larger than the Coffee land and includes a vast domain on the plateau. In this domain were the headwaters of Collins River, Big Creek, and beautiful Laurel Creek; in it were stands of virgin hardwoods, one enormous tract preserved to this day in the Savage Gulf Wilderness Area; in it even was an incorporated town—Beersheba Springs, organized in 1839 and destined to become one of the South's most famous pre-Civil War spas. Lowlands in the Warren land included Fults Cove, Northcutt's Cove, and, below Beersheba Springs, Collins River Valley. The great stands of timber in the coves were mostly walnut, ash, and poplar; oak predominated on top of the mountain, with some pine.

A provision in the law by which the county was established served to block Grundy for about ten years from obtaining the contiguous plateau land lying south of its original boundaries. This was the mountain fastness of Marion County. It contained the headwaters of the Sequatchie River and Fiery Gizzard Creek, more great hardwood forests, and, invisible to the eye, vast coal reserves. After this land was added to Grundy County, two important towns grew up within its bounds: Tracy City, during its

coal and coke boom one of the most prosperous places in the region; and Monteagle, a widely known summer resort.

Within its eventual boundaries Grundy County embraced an area of about 324 square miles—more than 200,000 acres—approximately four-fifths of which is on the Cumberland Plateau. The tableland rises almost 1000 feet above the surrounding valleys, reaching an average elevation of about 1850 feet. Ridges on the plateau exceed this average; the highest ones near Tracy City, for example, are 2161 feet.

* * *

Grundy County enjoys a temperate climate and receives plenteous rainfall. Annual precipitation averages about 60 inches, exceeding the state average by 10 inches. The year 1972, when 80 inches were recorded, provides a recent example of how much rain the county can receive. Summer weather on the plateau is noticeably milder than in neighboring valley counties. Days when the temperature rises to 90 or more degrees are infrequent, as are nights when the thinner mountain air does not cool to 65 or lower—which explains why the population of the mountain always has swelled in summer with families fleeing the oppressive heat of the lowland South. An unusual feature of winter weather is not so pleasant, namely an occasional dense fog when low clouds enshroud the mountain.

Grundy Countians have experienced their share of the vagaries of weather phenomena, most coming in the months of winter and early spring. That January will be the most severe month of winter is predictable, but this month in 1940 and again in 1977 proved to be the coldest ever recorded by the weather station at Monteagle, which was opened November 11, 1938. Whereas the typical January will have daytime highs in the mid-40s and lows of about 30 degrees, the median temperature in 1940 was 23.1 degrees and in 1977 23.3 degrees. The Grundy Lakes near Tracy City were frozen so deeply and solidly as to support motor vehicles. In each of these frigid months, the thermometer fell to 11 degrees below zero; severe cold snaps in January of 1963 and again in 1966 sent the mercury to record levels—14 below. The deepest recorded snowfall, however, came

February 13–14, 1960, when 18 inches were measured on the mountain, 11 in the valley.

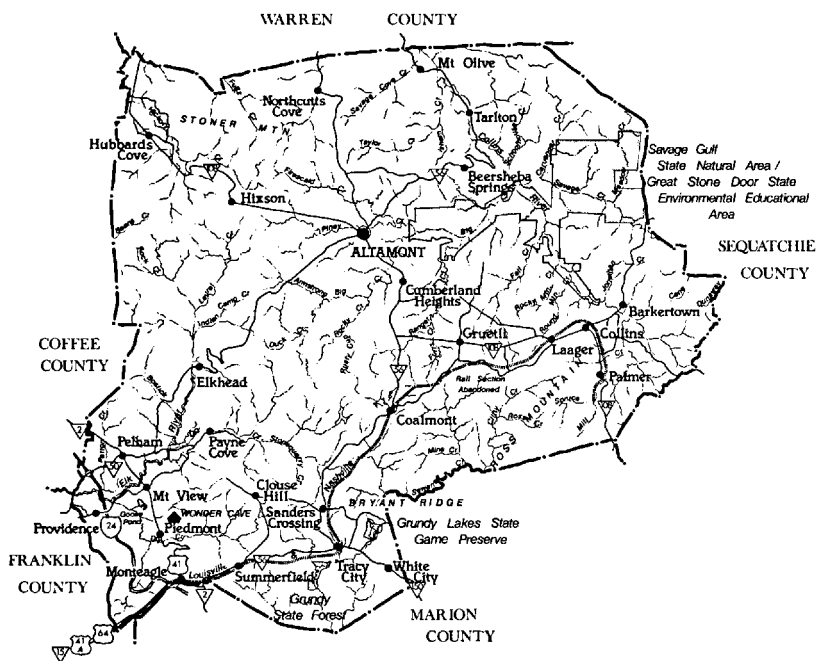
During the turbulence of late winter and early spring, high winds sometimes uproot trees and damage or destroy buildings. Less frequently, tornadoes touch down. Damage was estimated at about \$500,000 when a tornado struck the Monteagle-Summerfield vicinity the night of February 13, 1952. A tornado designated Shiloh 100 by scientists destroyed several structures near Altamont the night of April 4, 1974, when a widespread series of tornadoes devastated the Southeast and Midwest.

Highland that it mostly is, Grundy County even has been subject to flooding. The worst floods within memory occurred in 1928 and on March 15, 1973. In the latter flood Collins River was so far out of its banks that it resembled a vast lake at the foot of Beersheba Mountain in the Tarlton vicinity. Heavy rains choked other streams rising on the mountain, causing flooding where they descend into Burroughs Cove, Payne's Cove, and Hubbard's Cove.

Once the cold and the fog of winter and the turbulence of early spring have passed, however, the weather of Grundy County is mostly something to brag about. Spring in bloom, featuring redbud and dogwood, is lovely; summer, a world of green, is mild; fall, displaying the turn of the leaves of practically every hardwood of the forest, is gorgeous—magnificently so by the third weekend in October.

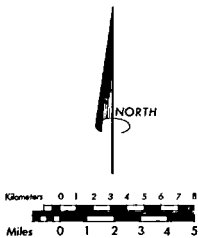
Indian Times (To 1819)

It is likely that Indian occupancy of present Grundy County dates to the prehistoric Archaic period (6000–1000 B.C.), and it is all but certain that Indians dwelt in the caves of the plateau and erected “wigwams” in the valleys below during the Woodland period (1000 B.C.–800 A.D.). In historic times it has been commonplace for a Grundy Countian to unearth a flint or an arrowhead as he walked behind his mule and plow or hoed out his garden. However, conclusive evidence that Indians of past ages actually lived on the mountain was not presented to archaeolo-



LEGEND

- COUNTY SEAT
- Other Communities
- ▭ Governmental Land Uses
- ◆ LANDMARKS
- SURROUNDING COUNTIES
- 40 Interstate Route
- 75 Federal Route
- State Route
- Local Route
- Prominent Peak
- RAIL SERVICE
- Major Streams
- Minor Streams



REFERENCE INFORMATION
 State of Tennessee Department of Transportation
 U.S. Department of Interior Geological Survey
 Tennessee Trails Association
 State of Tennessee Department of Conservation

GRUNDY COUNTY

gists and anthropologists until recently. In the summer of 1969, one significant find was made in the woods near Gruetli by Danny Mankin and Jackie Pickett, two young men who resided in the vicinity. After finding flints in the powdery soil of a cave floor, which was bone dry on account of being sheltered from the elements on the south side of a ridge, they decided to excavate.

The Mankin-Pickett find was astonishing. As the men sifted layer after layer through the depositions of time, they uncovered such objects as a mortar and pestle, a bone awl, a clay pipe, beads and shell ornaments, and a paint bowl. The dryness of the cave had preserved even artifacts fashioned from organic matter: arrow shafts, grass rope, a piece of an Indian blanket, feathers, and part of a bamboo blowgun; there were also corncobs. Especially remarkable was a moccasin, intricately woven of grass, still in usable condition except for holes worn in the sole. After digging about five feet down, Mankin and Pickett even turned up a bed slung from poles.

When these objects were examined by anthropologists of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, they were described as being artifacts of the Woodland Culture. The mortar and pestle used for grinding corn and the corncobs themselves are evidence of the cultivation of maize, which was introduced into Tennessee by the Woodland Indians. On the other hand, using shells for ornamentation may be traced as far back as the Archaic period, suggesting at least the possibility that the extraordinarily sheltered cave in Grundy County served as home for generations of Indians through thousands of years.

Several miles northwest of the Mankin-Pickett find, near Beersheba Springs, is a location where archaeologist William E. Myer has placed a prehistoric Indian village. Still to be seen near Beersheba is the "Indian Spring" where a basin for collecting water was hollowed out. Nearby, on the old L. V. Brown place, is another basin, this one chiseled out of a large flat rock where it is believed that Indian women knelt to grind their meal.

Other evidences in Grundy County of Woodland Indians—called "Mound Builders" by many early writers—are the earth-

ern burial mounds discovered in Pelham Valley and Collins River Valley. By now most of these have been destroyed unwittingly by farming operations, but one mound is extant near the town of Pelham. Located east of U.S. Highway 41 about one-half mile south of town, it rises about ten feet and measures 117 by 90 feet. Curiously, this prehistoric burial site is in an historic graveyard—the Warren family cemetery.

The names of the tribes of Woodland Indians who dwelt within the bounds of present Grundy County and the tongues they spoke are facts never recovered for history. Their successors, however, the Mississippi Indians who came into Tennessee after 1000 A.D., we meet in their later period as the Creeks of the eastern part of the state and as the Chickasaw of the western part, two of the tribes which spoke languages of the Muskogean group. The early Mississippians engaged in a more diverse agriculture than had the Woodland Indians. They grew beans, potatoes, squash, and pumpkins, as well as corn. Thus the thickly forested terrain of the Cumberland Plateau was unsuited to the Mississippi way of life, and there is no evidence of them there. The large villages in which they lived lay to the northwest, in the counties of Davidson, Williamson, and Sumner.

It is during the later Mississippi period that the first two white men may have reached the place which 300 years later would be Grundy County. The year was 1540, and the famous expedition led by the Spaniard Hernando de Soto had reached Chiaha, thought to be Burns Island, which is in the Tennessee River some miles below Moccasin Bend. De Soto had heard tales which intrigued him of a place rich with gold and copper, called—so he understood—“Chisca.” It was reputed to be in the mountains to the north, but may have been on beyond Cumberland Mountain near Old Stone Fort. De Soto sent off two scouts to investigate. Their route well may have taken them across the plateau near present Monteagle, then down into the valley of the Elk. After having located just one poor village, the scouts rejoined the expedition at Coste, on Pine Island in north Alabama.

In those protohistoric times (the period in which knowledge of the Indian past is a compound of archaeological data with a

little historic detail) Grundy County was much traversed, used somewhat as a hunting ground, but settled sparsely. An important Indian path, designated the Cisca and St. Augustine Trail in a study by archaeologist Myer, passed through the southwest corner of the county. This trail extended from Cisca, a village near Old Stone Fort in Coffee County, to the Spanish town of St. Augustine, Florida, the oldest city in the present United States. En route it traversed Pelham Valley, ascended the mountain above Wonder Cave, and crossed the narrow neck of the plateau southeast of Monteagle. There, entering present Marion County, the trail descended Battle Creek, crossing the Tennessee River near the mouth of the creek.

Another trail, the Chickamauga Path, passed through many more miles of Grundy County. After branching off the Cisca–St. Augustine Trail at the forks of Battle Creek, it ran along the plateau almost the entire south to north extent of the county. The trail passed to the east of the future location of Tracy City, bore northward toward present Coalmont and Gruetli, and continued thus on to Beersheba Springs—below which it descended the mountain into Collins River Valley, proceeding finally to Rock Island in present Warren County. It is through its two Indian paths that we soon shall see Grundy County passing from protohistory into the pages of history proper.

The tribes which appear to have made most use of the trails in ranging the plateau were non-Muskohegean-speaking Indians—the Yuchi (or Euchee), Shawnee, and Cherokee. In the early years of the eighteenth century, the increasingly powerful Cherokee Nation forced the two other tribes, along with the Creeks, from Tennessee. From the east they drove out the Creeks and the Yuchi, the former to the Ocheese Creek (now Ocmulgee River) vicinity of Georgia and the latter to the Chatahoochee Valley where they affiliated with the Creeks. From Middle Tennessee, in alliance with the Chickasaw, the Cherokee drove the Shawnee northward to the Ohio River and beyond.

Later in the eighteenth century, near the beginning of the Revolution, a group significant to the story of Grundy County, and of all southeast Tennessee, splintered from the Cherokee

Nation. Under the leadership of Dragging Canoe, this faction seceded in 1777 and settled what came to be called the Five Lower Towns, located on the Tennessee River below present Chattanooga. For the next 17 years the habitants of these towns blocked frontier traffic on the river. These were the Chickamauga, whose name it was that became attached to the path which traversed present Grundy County.

Colonel John Donelson and company in their keelboat *Adventure* made the most famous voyage of a frontier party which navigated down the Tennessee past the Lower Towns and lived to relate the tale of their encounter with the Chickamauga—an encounter for which they paid a dear price in casualties, both wounded and dead. This was in March of 1780. About eight years later another officer of the Revolution, Colonel James Brown, decided to venture off to the Cumberland settlements, following Donelson's water route. The party which launched out in an unusually well-protected boat numbered 16 whites: Brown himself, his wife, five sons, four daughters in childhood, and five young men. Strong though his vessel was, Brown made the mistake of being enticed by friendly appearances to let Indians board her just below the Lower Towns. For this mistake he paid with his own life and the lives of the other men. His wife and daughters were taken captive, and an amazing sequence of events led to the sparing of his son Joseph also. Six years later, Joseph Brown became the instrument by which the Five Lower Towns were conquered and the Tennessee River thrown open to traffic from upper East Tennessee. In the process Grundy County gained its first indisputably authentic entry into the annals of history.

It was John Sevier who finally delivered Joseph Brown, his sisters, and their mother from the Chickamauga. First the boy and then the others were handed over in an exchange of prisoners following one of Sevier's raids on the Indians. In the meantime, Joseph had lived as an adoptive member of the tribe which had abducted him, his adoption having been ordered for the boy's own safety by the Breath, chief of the village of Nicka-

jack. "He saw much and remembered everything," according to one historian's summing up of this period in Joseph's life.

After his rescue Joseph Brown belatedly reached the Cumberland settlements for which his late father had been bound, and his presence there eventually made possible the famous Nickajack Expedition. Not only on account of their blockade of the Tennessee had the Lower Towns been a thorn in the side of settlers of the old Mero District. From them also had been launched murderous overland raids on the settlements, the Chickamauga en route making use of the trails over the plateau which have been described. Except for two circumstances the frontiersmen would have retaliated long since. One was that officials in Washington disapproved of such impromptu attacks—a deterrent which the settlers could, and in the fullness of time would, find a way to circumvent. The second difficulty was that they did not know of a route by which to make a successful approach on the Lower Towns.

But now young Brown was in their midst to tell all he remembered of his captors' goings and comings. When plans for attacking the towns began secretly to be laid in the summer of 1794, Joseph accompanied a detachment under Colonel Isaac Roberts, "intrusted," according to A.W. Putnam's account, "to scour the head-waters of Elk . . . with the especial and secret purpose of discovering a route for an army to the Nickajack and Running-Water towns." The mission was a success, and it brought to Grundy County the forerunners of a large body of men which can be placed almost to the day within its bounds.

Numbering 550 mounted men under the command of Major James Ore, with Joseph Brown serving as guide, the Nickajack Expedition left Nashville on September 7, 1794. Putnam's account places the army at Old Stone Fort the night of the 9th and on the Tennessee River, resting on the eve of battle, on the night of the 12th. Thus "the crossing of Elk River and the Cumberland Mountain" probably occurred September 10–11, 1794, and one must believe that the route taken by the frontier army through what a half-century later would be Grundy County was that of

the Cisca Trail. In circumstances of such moment did our subject become a historic place.

The Nickajack Expedition was, of course, a success. With loss of but three men wounded, Ore's command destroyed Running Water and Nickajack, the two most hostile towns, and watched the survivors of their attack melt away into the forest. The upshot was, in the words of Donald Davidson's *The Tennessee*: "All Cherokee resistance now ended. The Five Lower Towns joined the upper towns in making a firm treaty with Governor Blount at Tellico Blockhouse."

At the time of the Nickajack Expedition the land which soon was to become the State of Tennessee remained, as it had been since 1790, the "Southwest Territory." Its governor was William Blount, who had been appointed by President Washington. Moreover, despite the success of the expedition in breaking the power of the Lower Cherokee, legal title to all the land in the territory, excepting upper East Tennessee and the basin of the Cumberland River, remained in Indian hands. Their land was strictly off limits to white settlers, who, if they were caught encroaching, were removed by federal soldiers. This state of affairs continued even after June 1, 1796, when Tennessee was admitted as the sixteenth of the United States of America.

The Cherokee claim to what would become Grundy County did not begin to be extinguished until October 25, 1805, in the Third Treaty of Tellico. By this agreement the Cherokee ceded to Tennessee their remaining claims north of the Duck River itself and north of a line extended from the source of the Duck eastward to the mouth of the Hiwassee River. This included much of what would become Warren County when it was organized in 1807. Especially to be noted in the cession is the lowland part of the tract which Grundy County eventually would obtain from Warren; that is, Collins River Valley. The plateau, though, was not included and would remain Cherokee land for another 14 years. However, another small portion of the county was acquired by Tennessee the next year (1806) in Dearborn's Treaty. This agreement gained from the Cherokee the land south of Duck River, which included the territory out of which

Franklin County would be formed—like Warren, in 1807. Pelham Valley was part of this cession.

The treaties of 1805–1806 opened much additional land in Middle Tennessee to settlement. The Cherokee Nation continued, however, to possess lower East Tennessee, including the Sequatchie Valley and the southern spurs of Walden Ridge and Cumberland Plateau. Even though pressure was mounting for the Cherokee to exchange their Tennessee land for territory west of the Mississippi River and many of them already had accepted removal, or said they would, the Nation continued to cling to its old hunting grounds in the mountains. It was not until 1817 that Governor Joseph McMinn and Andrew Jackson, acting as federal commissioner, persuaded the Cherokee to surrender the Sequatchie Valley in exchange for western lands. The wedge of white settlement thereby driven into Indian holdings led soon to the splitting off of the adjacent highlands. Two years after the Jackson and McMinn Treaty, on February 27, 1819, a Cherokee delegation in Washington City agreed to Calhoun's Treaty. By it the Indians surrendered their claims to the rest of the territory lying north of the Tennessee River and east and west of Sequatchie Valley.

Now all the land which a quarter of a century later would go to make up the new county of Grundy was open to frontiersmen and their families. Indian times were over; the white man's era had dawned.

Early Settlers and Founders (1805–1844)

Collins River Valley

No sooner did the Cherokee cede a portion of the land which one day would compose Grundy County than settlers—most of them with roots in North Carolina—began moving into it. By 1809, the year in which Warren County established its seat of justice at McMinnville, pioneers already had pushed far up into the Collins River Valley. There even was a church in the vicinity

of Savage Gulf, which, if the preaching was no more frequent than monthly, indicates a developing frontier society. Though its meeting-house now is to be found several miles northwest of its original location, the Philadelphia Baptist Church has observed the fourth Sunday in May as its annual meeting day every year since 1809. It is, therefore, one of the oldest churches in the lands ceded from 1805 onward.

By the census of 1820, Warren County had grown rapidly to a population of 10,343. Among the persons enumerated in the upper valley of Collins River, which eventually would form part of Grundy County, were some of the authentic “early settlers.” They included Ishan Dykes; John Gross; Reuben James; Isaac and William Roberts; Aaron, Alexander, John, and Robert Tate; and Gabriel, James, and Samuel Walker. Their surnames abound to this day in the vicinity of Tarlton and, on the mountain above, around Beersheba Springs.

Beersheba Springs

After Calhoun’s Treaty (1819) opened the plateau to settlement, that part of it in Warren County was occupied more slowly than the valley below. However, by 1826 William Dugan, who had emigrated from North Carolina two years before, was one of those who had purchased mountain land. One of his first entries in the registrar’s office was for 150 acres on the south side of Little Laurel Creek in “the horseshoe known as Charley’s Camp.” In 1833 Dugan was residing some miles from this holding, at the foot of the mountain. There he was visited one day by a gentleman who was a prosperous merchant and an extensive landowner, with his wife, of McMinnville—by then grown to a thriving place of 700 inhabitants. Dugan’s visitors were John and Beersheba Porter Cain, who were traveling on horseback. While the menfolk, Dugan and Cain, perhaps sat talking of Dugan’s land on the plateau, Mrs. Cain went exploring the woods near the house. During her walk, according to the traditional account, she came upon a well-defined path leading up the mountain and turned into it. If she expected the path to provide

her a short woodland walk and then play out, Beersheba received a surprise; for the trail—surely the old Chickamauga Path—ascended all the way to the bluff under the top of the mountain. There, thirsty from her exertions, the woman discovered the great chalybeate (iron water) spring and drank from it.

Beersheba Porter Cain, according to very old tradition, was the first white person ever to see the spring which soon would be renowned for its curative values. Thus it was called Beersheba's Spring, which, slightly transposed, became the name of the town which grew up around it—Beersheba Springs (locally known merely as Beersheba, pronounced BURR-shi-buh). The name of the place bespeaks the subsequent interest of John Cain in the spring his wife is reputed to have found. In 1834 he bought from Dugan the land surrounding it and began to erect cabins near the bluff. Within two years Dr. Alfred Paine, a McMinnville physician, also had built a cabin and was present to prescribe the use of the chalybeate waters. Also in 1836, George R. Smartt, Paine's brother-in-law, and William R. Stewart, both of Warren County, bought the spring and 1500 acres surrounding it for \$1000. Excepted were the lots where stood the cabins of Cain and Dr. Paine. There is a provision in the deeds by which William Dugan conveyed the mountain land to each of his buyers that "they and their heirs might forever enjoy the privilege of drinking the water of the chalybeate spring, and by their instrumentality, bring it into use and repute, that others might enjoy it."

About two years later Stewart left, selling out to his partner George Smartt, who developed and operated the resort for about the next 15 years. Smartt built a small hotel, several log cabins, and a dining room, the hotel being a long row of log rooms. These improvements were completed by 1839, the year of the first incorporation of Beersheba Springs, which soon enjoyed a growing reputation as a health resort. One illustrious personage drawn during this period to the waters by his declining health was former President Andrew Jackson.



Summer people gathered around the house built over Beersheba's Spring

Elk River Valley

By the time yeoman farmers and herdsmen had pushed settlement as far south as Beersheba Springs, there were people living in Warren County up to 25 miles from the seat of justice. Nearly the same thing had happened in what until 1836 had been the eastern reaches of Franklin County and then had become the extreme southeast of Coffee County. Each year since Dearborn's Treaty (1806) had witnessed more settlers in the valley of the Elk. They pushed ever nearer the mountain, filling the valley itself and then the coves (Trussell, Bell, Layne, Payne,

Burroughs) and even the hollows (Smith, Parmley, Spring, Campbell). As early as 1812, Solomon Saunders, native of Cornwall, England, had settled in Payne's Cove—attracted there because he loved to hunt and game abounded.

The ever increasing numbers finally warranted a post office—the first to be opened any place in future Grundy County. It was established April 4, 1832, at Pelham, then in Franklin County, with Benjamin Hollingsworth as postmaster. Except for a period of about four months in 1867, this office has remained open ever since.

The valley profited from being situated along the Nashville stage road. How the enterprising can benefit along a main route may be suggested by the example of Harris Gilliam. About 1830 he erected a double log dwelling—today still a handsome residence serving his granddaughter as home—in Bell's Cove near the foot of the mountain below the present site of Monteagle. Gilliam made his place do double duty; it was a residence and an inn used both by stage drivers and stock drovers.

From those earliest days forward, the main north-south route, including the Southern Highway (U.S. 41) of motor vehicle times, traversed the extent of Pelham Valley. A place of interest to many travelers by 1900 was Wonder Cave. Noted for its onyx formations, it attracted up to 40,000 visitors in a year. However, in February 1962, the boon of a main road suddenly was snatched away when the segment of Interstate 24 up Cumberland Mountain was opened, leaving a mere trickle of traffic along the old route. It proved a crippling development which no one could mend, unlike 120 years before when residents of the valley of the Elk and elsewhere nearby faced an unsatisfactory situation for which the Constitution did provide a remedy.

The Founding (1843–1844)

By the year 1843 sentiment for a new county had developed to such a pitch in Collins River Valley, on Cumberland Plateau, and in Elk River Valley that steps began to be taken to establish one. A petition setting forth the need for a new county and outlining its proposed boundaries made the rounds and collected

more than 300 signatures. It was submitted to State Senator Samuel H. Laughlin, representing Warren County, who duly brought it before the Tennessee Senate. The matter received expeditious handling in the General Assembly, suggesting that interested parties had laid the groundwork for gaining the needed authorization.

On December 29, 1843, the petition was referred to the House Committee on New Counties and County Lines, in which there originated House Bill 314: "A Bill to Establish the County of Grundy." The bill set boundaries, directed that Beersheba Springs be the temporary seat of justice, and appointed five commissioners to organize Grundy County.

Three of the commissioners were Warren County men: William Dugan, the early investor in mountain land; James Tate; and Adrian Northcutt (Adren Northcut on old tax rolls, but known to posterity by the spelling used). Northcutt is an interesting study. At the age of seven—about 1806—Northcutt's people brought him from Virginia to Warren County. His father never was accounted for after the Battle of New Orleans (1815), and Adrian reached young manhood poor. He soon prospered, however, mainly through an ability to trade profitably in livestock; and he acquired thousands of acres of land, much of it in the cove which today bears his surname. The other two commissioners were Coffee County men: Alfred Brawley and John Burrows.

H.B. 314 encountered no trouble in the House, but in the Senate it was tagged with an important amendment. Josiah Anderson of Marion County, Speaker of the Senate, pronounced himself in favor of the bill, "Provided that nothing in this act contained shall be so construed as to authorize or attach any portion of the territory now belonging to Marion County to the County of Grundy." The bill was so amended and passed into law January 29, 1844, a month to the day after Senator Laughlin presented the petition. Even if Grundy County was to be blocked for about the next ten years from filling out its southern and eastern boundaries on the plateau, and it would take a constitutional amendment to do so, it did now have a legal existence.

The five commissioners hastened to get the county organized. Meeting February 17 at the home of Major William Armstrong, they elected Northcutt their president and Burrows secretary. They also issued a notice concerning the running of the dividing lines between Grundy and Coffee and between Grundy and Warren, an account of which already has been given.

Convening again at Major Armstrong's on May 11, the commissioners set May 25 as the date on which residents of the territories stricken from Coffee and Warren counties might vote to approve or disapprove the new county. In those days of poor roads and slow means of travel, in a place where getting around was made all the more difficult by having to walk out of coves and hollows, to ford streams and rivers, and even to climb mountains, it was of course necessary to set up a number of voting places. On the plateau these were at the homes of Daniel Fults and Robert Tate; on Collins River at John Gross's; in Northcutt's Cove at Adrian Northcutt's; in Hubbard's Cove at James Winton's; and at a place (or places) unnamed in the Elk River area. Two days after the voting, the commissioners certified the results: 210 in favor of the new county, 37 against it. At the same meeting a new commission was appointed to divide the new county into civil districts. Its members were John Fults, William S. Mooney, Phillip Roberts, William B. Smartt, and Robert Tate.

The first election of officials in Grundy County was held July 6, 1844, the results of which were canvassed at Jesse Wooten's the following Monday. Emerging as the county's first "high sheriff" was Phillip Roberts. Other officers were Reuben Webb, county court clerk; Abraham Jones, registrar of deeds; and John Burrows, trustee. The first constables were Solomon P. Goodman, John C. Lockhart, Alexander Nunley, John Tipton, and Elijah Walker. Now Grundy County, Tennessee, not only was a bounded place on earth, it was also a functioning government.

Felix Grundy and His Namesake

Before taking leave of the founding of the county, identification needs to be made of the man for whom it was named and

an explanation given as to why he was so honored. Grundy County was named for Felix Grundy. Born in Virginia in 1777, he removed with his family to Kentucky in 1780 when it still was a place of danger. That three members of the Grundy family were scalped sufficiently attests the fact. After beginning the practice of law in 1798, Grundy rose swiftly in his profession. In 1806, at the age of 29, he already had been made Chief Justice of Kentucky. Soon thereafter, though, he moved to Nashville. There he earned the reputation of a criminal lawyer with "few if any equals and no superiors." In Tennessee he defended 165 persons on charges of capital offenses and lost just one of them on the gallows. He was elected to Congress in 1811, serving till 1814; and to the U.S. Senate, of which he was a member from 1829 to 1838, during the Presidency of Jackson, whom he followed in his politics. He served as Attorney General of the United States under President Martin Van Buren and had just been reelected to the Senate at the time of his death in 1840.

It is evident, therefore, that Felix Grundy was a great man both in Tennessee politics and on the national Democratic scene. Having died just a few years before a new county was formed, he well might be honored by having his name attached to this county. However, Grundy had a more particular connection with the place named for him. With a Boston attorney named Samuel B. Barrell, he owned thousands upon thousands of acres of land on the Cumberland Plateau. This vast holding was inherited by his six sons-in-law, two of whom—John M. Bass and Jacob McGavock—later had cottages at Beersheba Springs.

It was Senator Laughlin who claimed credit for seeing to it that the fitting link of the man to the place should be made. In Laughlin's diary there is this entry: "In 1843-4 . . . I assisted zealously in getting Grundy County established, and by my pertinacious perseverance got it named after my old and valued friend, Felix Grundy."

The Coal Discovery

One other story needs still to be related to complete this chapter on early settlers and founders. This is a story in which



Felix Grundy



Beersheba Porter Cain

someone finds something which provides the basis for the founding of the greatest industry that Grundy County has had to this day.

By the mid-1840s a few early settlers had established themselves in the vicinity of the future location of Tracy City, then still covered with forests abounding with deer and other game. One settler was Benjamin Wooten, who had moved to the mountain from Warren County. His place was situated up in what Tracy City people call "The Heading."

Here Wooten planted each year a patch of about two acres of corn. A great find was made one day in this corn field, according to an account given years later by Wooten's son Thomas. "One fall," he recalled, "some groundhogs began to destroy our crop, and we got after one and treed it under a sourwood . . . While scratching and digging after the groundhog, we unearthed a black substance resembling rich dirt."

The "rich dirt" proved, of course, to be coal. It was found very near the spot where, little more than a decade later, a great mine named Wooten No. 1 would be put down by northern investors. In the meantime, Ben Wooten and his boys had been

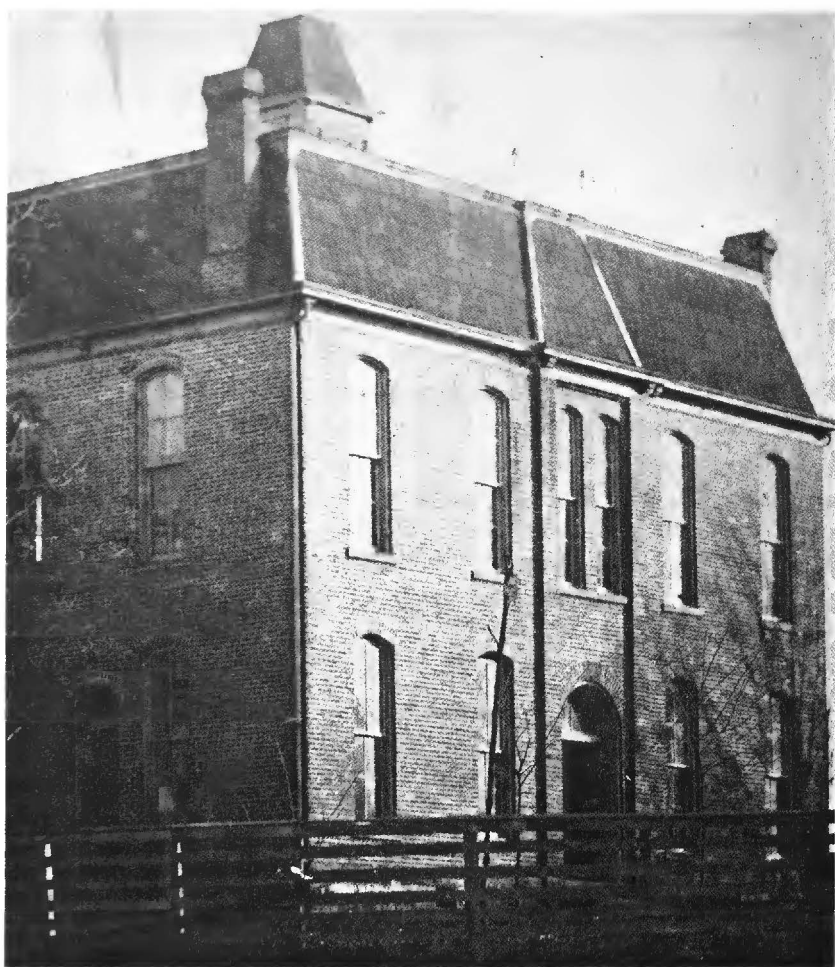
picking out a little coal and taking it off from time to time to peddle to blacksmiths in the valley toward Winchester.

The Seat of Justice (1844–1958)

The legislative act establishing Grundy County directed that its various courts should meet in the beginning at Beersheba Springs. Accordingly, county officers held their first meeting at this place August 5, 1844. However, it soon became apparent—perhaps had been known—that Beersheba was not conveniently located to be a seat of justice for the new county. It was beautifully situated on a bluff overlooking the valley of the Collins River and at the time was the only incorporated town in Grundy County; but for citizens of such locales as Hubbard's Cove and Elk River Valley, it was a most out-of-the-way place. Thus justices of the peace attended Quarterly Court there only a few times before moving for a single session to the log cabin of Jesse Wooten, which stood on the mountain above Burroughs Cove.

Within about two years after the governing agencies of the county began to function, the courts were meeting at Altamont, which is located about five miles southwest of Beersheba Springs. Though it did not incorporate until March 2, 1854, this place had gained a post office—only the second in the county—in 1845. When it became the seat of Grundy County in 1846, Altamont was near its geographic center and as convenient to the whole of the citizenry as any place then could be. Moreover, it was on the stage route between McMinnville and Jasper—Higginbotham's Turnpike. Several miles southwest of McMinnville, near the present site of Viola, this turnpike turned southeasterly toward Fults Cove, ascended the mountain en route to Altamont, from which it proceeded south across the plateau via Freemont, Gwyn Hill, and Foster Falls, before descending the mountain and emerging a few miles above Jasper.

At the time of its incorporation, Altamont encompassed 276 acres and contained 77 lots. Forty-two heads of households were listed on its earliest tax rolls (1854), indicating a population of at least 200. Residents elected Josiah Argo to be their first mayor;



Early view of Grundy County Courthouse, built at Altamont in 1885 and still in use.

and, as aldermen, Steven M. Griswald, A. H. Killian, John Northcutt, and Stephen Tipton. Appointed town recorder was William C. Hill, along with J. H. Levan, treasurer, and William E. Northcutt, constable. Griswald seems to have been the only attorney at the seat of justice, and he possessed the most valuable

taxable property, having paid \$2.51 on 50 acres of land, two sets of earrings, and a watch. Altamont also boasted two physicians, a saddler, a blacksmith, and several other tradesmen.

The present courthouse, a two-story brick structure, was erected at Altamont in 1885. An annex which houses several offices was added in 1958. The county built, in 1904, a picturesque brick jail with a unique mob cell in its fourth floor tower; it was one of the first construction jobs in the county making use of concrete. This jail has not been in use since being replaced in the mid-1970s by a modern facility on the same lot, but it is listed on the National Register of Historical Places. Before 1904 the county jail had been located in a log structure a block north of the courthouse. The late Lewis F. Fults of Altamont, county historian for many years, witnessed the building of the 1904 jail and remembered the old one. Of the latter he said, "It was built with oak logs sealed with two-inch lumber. It was on a flat rock, and there was just no way of getting out."

When, in the 1850s, mountain land from Marion County extended Grundy's boundaries 10 to 15 miles southward, Altamont ceased to be at the center of the county. Moreover, as population increased in the extreme south during boom times at Tracy City, the need for civic services—especially those provided by the sheriff and circuit court clerk—was greater there than at the north end of the county. Dissatisfaction thus arose over the location of the county seat. When Coalmont was established in 1904, citizens discussed moving the seat there—very nearly the center of the county—but nothing came of it. The matter was resolved, though not without abiding rancor in the north, when a private act was pushed through the General Assembly in 1913 establishing a branch circuit court at Tracy City. This court made use of the old Colyar House, formerly a hotel, for its purposes.

Citizens of Grundy County having public business soon learned which officeholders they could find in Altamont and which in Tracy City. In the latter the sheriff, circuit court clerk, and trustee had their offices in the Colyar House (which Tracy Citizens began calling "the courthouse"). The county also placed a cage for jailing prisoners in this building. On the other hand,



Old county jail, built in 1904, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

the county court clerk and the registrar of deeds always were to be found in Altamont, and the superintendent of education generally was there. A deputy sheriff maintained the county jail.

While county business was being conducted from two locations, the highway department was established. The superintendent of roads chose to locate his office in Tracy City, and the county garage was set up there on the grounds of the old ice plant. In improved facilities the office and garage remain today at this location.

All other offices, however, now have been returned to Altamont. In spite of a vociferous and an acrimonious outcry from the south of the county, bills were passed in 1957 by the Grundy County Quarterly Court and enacted into law by the General Assembly abolishing the branch circuit court. Efforts failed both in Chancery Court and the State Supreme Court to block the transfer of offices from Tracy City. The county renovated and enlarged the courthouse at Altamont, enabling the 1885 building to accommodate all county offices and to provide an adequate courtroom by the fall of 1958.

Between 1913 and 1958 the belief was widespread, even locally, that Grundy was a county with two seats. The fact is, however, that Altamont never ceased to be the official seat of justice. Tracy City simply was authorized as the location for a branch circuit court, and through a long period extending beyond a generation, many citizens came to believe that the presence of this court and of related county offices made the town as much entitled as Altamont to be regarded as the county seat. Even a battle in the courts, which mountain people do not much trust anyhow, did not convince everyone around Tracy City otherwise.

A Tale of Two Towns (1850–1860)

The story of Grundy County's first full decade (1850–1860) is dominated by momentous events taking place at extreme opposite ends of the county—at Beersheba Springs in the north and at Tracy City in the south. In the north the agents of this action were men looking upon the mountain as a place of great

natural beauty which could be used to foster the highest human purposes, while those in the south were eyeing it as a place with a marketable resource which could be exploited commercially. Yet by the end of the decade, the two groups representing disparate interests found that they could unite in an enterprise which each could advance in its own way. Before relating this "tale of two towns," however, the place has been reached to take a look at the early population of the county.

First Families

The first census of Grundy County was made in 1850 when the population was found to be 2773. A tax roll of a few years later (ca. 1856) indicates that there were by then 236 Negro slaves in the county, and that about 170 surnames were distributed among the total number of persons. The fact that the family names most common in the county today are the same as those occurring most frequently on the early rolls is one evidence that population growth has taken place more by inbreeding than by in-migration. Specifically, the surnames appearing on the tax rolls most often were these: Nunley and Tate, 13 times each; Brawley, 11; Walker, 10; Smith, eight; Fults, Meeks, Northcut, and Roberts, seven each; and Lane (today spelled Layne), Thompson, and Wooten, six each. To compare, in recent telephone directories there are more than 60 entries each for Meeks, Nunley, and Layne—by far the most common three surnames in the county. These are followed by Tate, Fults, and Smith from among the old names; while Sanders, ranking fourth overall today, is the only name commonplace now which was not among the ten most numerous families in the beginning. Only the Brawleys and the Wootens have declined markedly since 1855.

Listed on the earliest tax rolls are several names which amuse the contemporary mind and ear. Among these are Navagator Brawley, Gideon Gilley, Dolphin Knight, Bird Lusk, Britania Savage, Greenbery Sweeton, and Haul White.

These are the "first families" of Grundy County; that is, those whose surnames appear on that early tax roll:

Adams, Anderson, Argo, Arnold, Armfield, Armstrong, Aylor; Bailey, Barker, Barnes, Barrell, Barrett, Beasley, Bell, Bennett, Bess, Birdwell, Blair, Blancot, Bond, Bost, Bouldin, Bradshaw, Branch, Brannon, Brawley, Bryant, Brown, Burnett, Burrows; Cagle, Caldwell, Campbell, Cates, Christian, Cleveland, Cope, Coppinger, Cornelison, Countiss, Cox, Crabtree, Crosland, Crouch, Cunningham;

Davis, Deren, Dodd, Dorris, Dugan, Dykes; Fletcher, Franklin, Fults; Garretson, Gibbs, Gilley, Gilliam, Givens, Goodman, Green, Griswold, Gross, Guest, Gunn; Halcomb, Hale, Hamby, Hampton, Harrison, Henderson, Henley, Hill, Hobbs, Hughes, Humble; Jacobs, Johnson, Jones; Keel, Kilgore, Killian, King, Knight;

Landers, Lane, Lankford, Lawson, Laxton, Levan, Lockhart, Lovelace, Low, Lusk, Lutherlance; McBride, McCoulough, McGraw, Martin, Meeks, Mooney, Morton, Mucleroy, Mullins, Murphy, Myers; Neasbett, Northcut, Nunley; Oliver; Pane, Parks, Passon, Patrick, Patterson, Patton, Pearson, Perry, Person, Phipps, Pickett, Powell, Price;

Ransom, Rhea, Richardson, Roberts, Rogers, Ross, Rush; Sain, Sanders, Sartin, Savage, Scott, Scruggs, Sheid, Sites, Smartt, Smith, Spung, Stepp, Stone, Stotts, Stringer, Sutherland, Sweeten; Tallent, Tallman, Tate, Thomas, Thompson, Tipton, Tucker, Turner; Vickers; Wagoner, Walker, Wannamaker, Warner, Warren, Weaver, White, Wiley, Williams, Willis, Windham, Winton, Woodlee, Wooten, Worthington.

More than 70 per cent of these surnames still are to be found in Grundy County.

Marketing Tracy City Coal

For the first few years nobody was very enthusiastic about Ben Wooten's "black diamint." Forests were everywhere, making wood plenteous for cooking and heating. Elsewhere in Tennessee, wood still was being used in the ironmaking process. Furthermore, there were no rails laid yet over which steam locomotives might haul coal to the furnaces of northern Middle Tennessee. In fact, the locomotives that were beginning to run elsewhere

were themselves wood-burners, as were the steamboats that plied the great rivers—the Cumberland, Tennessee, Ohio, and the mighty Mississippi. Thus it is doubtful that anyone on Cumberland Mountain saw the future awaiting Mr. Wooten's coal.

However, one day in the year 1850, someone arrived on the mountain who had glimpsed that future. He was a young Irishman named Leslie Kennedy, one of the immigrants taking flight during the potato famine in his native country. In all likelihood Kennedy reached the Cumberland Plateau on the Nashville stage and then began hiking over the tableland. In the course of his trek, he found outcroppings of coal. Subsequent events suggest that the coal Kennedy saw included that of Benjamin Wooten. Something in his experience—what we do not know—made him know the potentialities of this mineral, and he returned to Nashville seeking someone to finance the exploitation of his discovery. He succeeded in arousing the cupidity of an attorney practicing in the capital, William N. Bilbo, who accompanied Kennedy on a return trip to the forest wilderness where he had found coal.

Bilbo was impressed. He bought up Wooten's coal land; and he bought more land from the heirs of Samuel Barrell, Felix Grundy's partner. Then he went to New York city in search of financiers whom he could persuade to raise the money which would be needed to develop coal mines in Tennessee. He found five such men—four of them capitalists and the fifth a civil engineer. Their leader was Samuel Franklin Tracy, a merchant whose firm was located at 52 University Place; the others were J. Bridges, John Daw, Nicholas Fesedder, and William Warne.

In 1852, after Tracy and several other New Yorkers had come to Tennessee to inspect the property, it was purchased from Bilbo for a figure said to have been \$50,000. Then a charter of incorporation was obtained from the State of Tennessee for the Sewanee Mining Company. Offices for this new firm were located at 26½ Broadway, the heart of the commercial district in Manhattan, New York. The company was capitalized at \$1,500,000, with paid-in capital of \$400,000. It owned 17,950 acres outright and the mineral and timber rights to another



Entrance to Tracy City's first coal mine, where operations began in 1858

3780 acres, the most productive of which would prove to be in Grundy County. Tracy later would use land where the coal was found to be of little value for the purpose of expressing corporate generosity.

Northern investors in the coal fields of the Cumberland Plateau did not commit themselves to such a costly venture without knowing that a means was at hand by which they could ship their product to market. The day of the railroad was dawning. In fact, the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad had begun laying its rails before the Sewanee Mining Company was incorporated and had run its first passenger train the few miles from Nashville out to Antioch on April 13, 1851. In the months thereafter, building continued apace mile by mile, extending the rails to Murfreesboro, Wartrace, Tullahoma, Decherd, and Cowan, en

route to the Tennessee-Alabama line, below which the new tracks would follow the Tennessee River into Chattanooga. By January 6, 1854, the main line was completed between Nashville and Chattanooga; and by July, with the problem of landslides overcome, the two cities were said to be "securely united by rails." It is interesting to note that the president of the Nashville and Chattanooga and the man called "the real builder of the road" was Vernon K. Stevenson, son-in-law to John M. Bass, in turn the son-in-law of Felix Grundy.

The vision of the investors in the Sewanee Mining Company was to supply coal to a vast region from Nashville southeast to Charleston and Savannah—a dream which could become a reality upon the completion of the Nashville and Chattanooga and the Memphis and Charleston railroads. Up to that time Nashville, for example, had depended on Pennsylvania coal coming down the Ohio River and then up the Cumberland, the latter at times uncertain due to low water. Cost of this coal was as much as \$12 per ton. When its Cumberland Mountain branch line connected with the N&C, the company would be able to offer Nashville a cheaper and more dependable coal supply.

It was from near Cowan that the Sewanee Mining Company constructed its branch railroad. This branch leaves the main road at the tunnel two miles southeast of Cowan. A mountain railroader of the late nineteenth century, W. W. Knight, has left a description of the branch road in its ascent of the plateau. The line, he wrote, "was dubbed the 'Goat Road' because it ascends the Cumberland Mountain for a distance of six miles of almost continuous reverse curves at a grade of 112 feet per mile."

As this precipitous road was being engineered, the Sewanee company was developing its first mines at a place called Coal Bank. The precise location of these mines is unknown today, but it is believed that they were in Franklin County, in the present St. Andrew's-Midway vicinity, just a few miles from where the Goat Road achieved the summit of the mountain where Sewanee is today. By 1856 the branch had been completed up the mountain and some coal had been mined, permitting the first shipments to be made.

No sooner, however, was the company in production than it encountered a serious problem requiring another large capital investment. Neither the quantity nor the quality of the coal from the Coal Bank mines was satisfactory. Thus the decision was made to extend the branch line 10 miles farther along the plateau, to the very site where Thomas Wooten had unearthed coal while digging for a groundhog. Wooten No. 1 was put down, and by November 8, 1858, the first shipment of coal from this mine was on the rails. In the meantime, the town of Tracy City, named for the president of the Sewanee Mining Company, had come into existence. A post office opened at this place September 14, 1858.

The Splendid Seasons at the Springs

Within the same year that the railroad arrived and the first mines began to produce in the great coal field at Tracy City, a wonderful climax also was being achieved 20 miles to the north at Beersheba Springs. By the season of 1858 the place had come into its own as a spa of wide renown. From the pleasant mountain resort with a modest local reputation which it had been under the management of George Smartt, Beersheba Springs had



John Armfield
Developed Resort at Beersheba



Leslie Kennedy
Tracy City Coal Pioneer

earned for itself a name throughout the South as a fashionable watering place. The man who had come to the plateau several years before and in the meantime invested the capital which had made the springs such a grand place was John Armfield, a retired slave-trader. An account of Armfield's life appeared in 1944 in the *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, written by the late Miss Isabel Howell, archivist and historian, who was herself a cottage owner and lifetime summer resident of Beersheba Springs. Her narrative was published in two parts: "John Armfield, Slave-trader" and "John Armfield of Beersheba Springs."

Born in North Carolina in 1797, Armfield as a young man had hired himself out in Virginia as a stagecoach driver. Later, he became associated with Isaac Franklin and with him traded in slaves who had been gathered mostly from older Virginia estates and sold to plantations in the rapidly developing Old Southwest. After having become wealthy in this traffic, which by all accounts they conducted in a manner as considerate of the blacks as conditions permitted, Franklin and Armfield closed out their partnership in 1836 and removed from Alexandria, Virginia, to Tennessee. In the meantime, Armfield had married his partner's niece, Miss Martha Franklin.

John Armfield's slave-trading days lay years behind him by the day, probably in 1854, that his trusted servant Nathan Bracken drove him in a Jersey wagon up Broad Mountain to look in upon Beersheba Springs. They had come all the way from Sumner County, Armfield perhaps hoping to find a hermitage high above the busy world and the fever of life. He was, to begin with, worn out by lawsuits. Franklin had died; and as executor of his estate, he unavoidably had become involved in entangled proceedings. Then, too, in regard to health, he had seen better days in his 57 years.

Armfield's knowledge of the springs on Cumberland Mountain almost certainly came to him through his friend John M. Bass, the husband of Malvinia Grundy. By then the buildings and grounds surrounding Beersheba's spring no longer were owned by George Smartt but had been sold to Dr. R. H. Robards of Memphis, a man burdened with debt and not averse to selling

out. Armfield quickly decided he would like to buy, and in December 1854, negotiations were concluded. The terms of sale called for Armfield to pay off Robards' debt of \$3750 to John Hopkins French of McMinnville. In exchange he was to receive the deed to 1000 acres of land, the original tavern, dining hall, proprietor's rooms, and a row of guest cabins. In a separate transaction Armfield paid \$1200 to William (Buck) White for his residence across from the main buildings of the resort. Built of red cedar logs, the dwelling was to be greatly enlarged and improved by Armfield, whose home it was for the last 17 years of his life.

The next April (1855) Armfield placed an advertisement in a Nashville newspaper announcing that Beersheba Springs would be closed until May of 1856, during which time "a thorough repair" would be completed. To be the foreman of this job, Armfield employed Ben Cagle, a millwright and mechanic from Irving College. He also hired A. T. Mitchell, carpenter, and T. P. Argo, operator of the brick kiln. Armfield's workmen, skilled though they were, did not succeed in getting his resort ready to open for the season of 1856. The reopening had to be postponed till June 1, 1857.

Miss Howell has listed the attractions then provided—and the restrictions imposed upon—guests at Beersheba Springs. There was, she wrote, "a new hotel building and new cottages, a table with all the delicacies of the season, a good bowling alley, and a fine ball-room supplied with music. . . . Wine and liquor might be supplied for table use but there would be no saloon. Gambling was prohibited and professional gamblers need not apply for rooms. The rate was to be \$2 a day, \$10 a week, or \$35 a month. There would be no charge for light or fire."

A branch line connecting with the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad at Tullahoma and providing service to McMinnville via Manchester just had been completed, and it was recommended that guests take the train to McMinnville. There they would find a stagecoach to Beersheba Springs, charging a fare of \$2. No extra charge was made for baggage not exceeding 60 pounds, and children in arms might travel free. The practice

soon developed for the stage drivers, when they reached the foot of Broad Mountain, to blow their horns in such a way as to signal the number of guests in the coach. At the top of the mountain, "The guests at the hotel crowded out on the observatory and answered the horn . . . , great encouragement to the toilers on the mountainside," according to an account given by Mrs. Sue Howell Adams, a cottager at Beersheba through the latter part of the nineteenth century. Her kinsman, Alfred E. Howell, has written what the trip up the mountain was like for those in the coach: "There were four horses to the big stage that carried the trunks 'in the boot' behind. And what a ride it was! Seven or eight inside—four to six on the outside—a railing round the top holding the lighter bags and packages, and six or eight trunks in the boot. . . . I can hear the crack of the long whip when we started again after the very numerous pauses to let the horses blow. And such a rolling and pitching inside, of bundles and children and . . . dear ladies."

The brilliant prewar heyday of the Beersheba Springs Hotel lasted just three seasons—1858, 1859, and 1860. L. D. Mercer of McMinnville managed the hotel for Armfield in 1858 when more than 400 guests were accommodated at one time. Entertainments included a fox hunt, horseback rides and walks to Stone Door and the Old Mill, a fine sermon preached by Bishop Elliott, card games, dancing, lots of wonderful conversation, and a climactic calico ball.

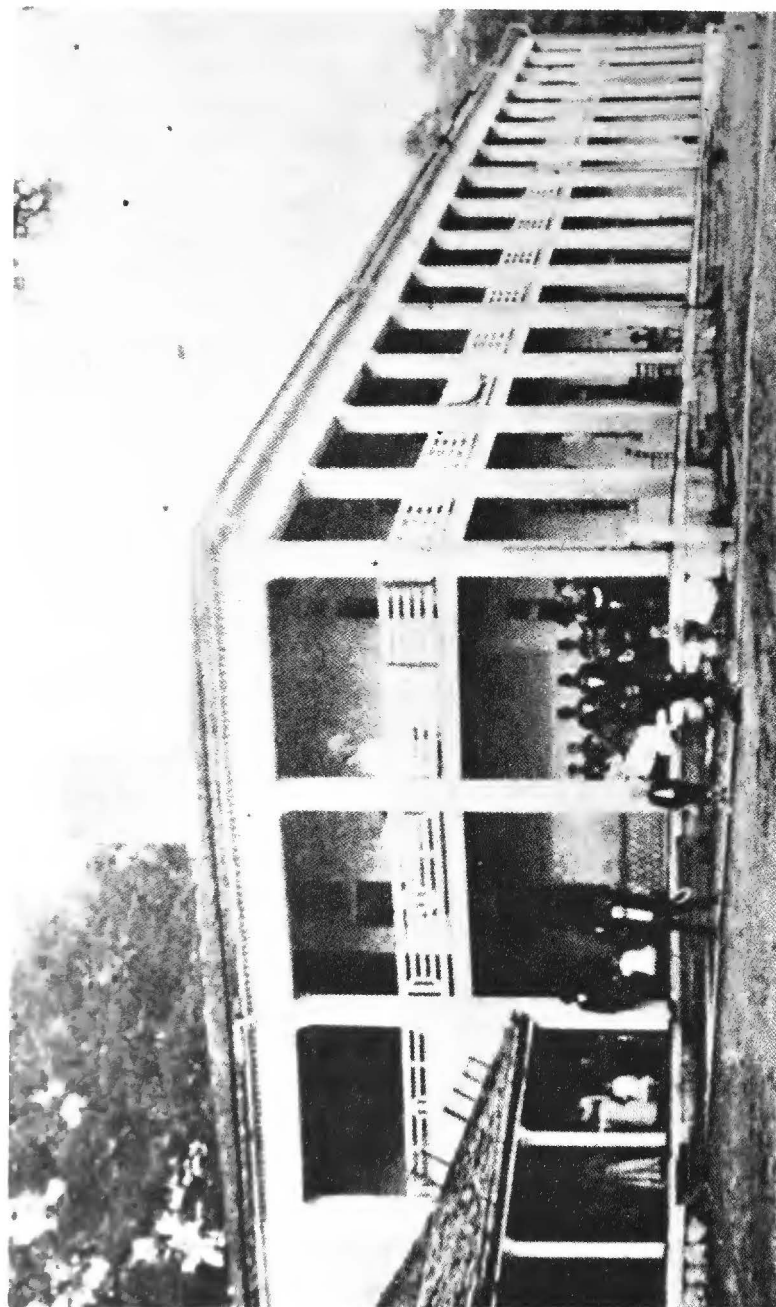
During these years John Armfield was selling cottage lots and building cottages—20 of them. These included one double cabin of hewn logs, to which an upstairs later was added; four weather-boarded dwellings with deep verandas and smoothly plastered walls; and three houses with towering 15-foot ceilings. The buyers of these cottages, which ranged in price from \$1500 to \$5000, were a distinguished set of prewar southerners. Among them were John M. Bass of Nashville, who already has been noted a number of times in this history; Dr. Thomas Harding of Nashville, whose wife was a daughter of Bass; Charles G. Dahlgren, who rose to brigadier general in the army of the Confederacy; Sterling Cockrill, son of the "wool champion of the world,"

Mark Robertson Cockrill; Bishop Leonidas Polk of Louisiana and Bishop James H. Otey of Tennessee; William L. Murfree, father of Mary Noailles Murfree (Charles Egbert Craddock), who fictionalized Beersheba Springs as New Helvetia Springs in her postwar stories collected in *In the Tennessee Mountains*; and Minor Kenner, grandson of the last governor of the Natchez Territory and brother to a Confederate ambassador.

The University Place

The season of 1859 matched in brilliance the preceding one, and it was made especially memorable by an historic meeting held at Beersheba Springs. This was a convening of the southern bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church to draw up a charter for a "University of the South." This institution was the conception of Bishop Polk, a friend of John Armfield as well as one of his cottagers. In fact, the bishop once promised Armfield that the locale of his springs would be considered as a possible site for the university. Another of the cottagers, Bishop Otey, fostered the idea that this new place of learning should be located in a setting of natural beauty. He believed that "beautiful surroundings influence profoundly the youthful mind."

There was, however, another site on the plateau, 20 miles to the southwest, which circumstances combined to make more attractive. Two years before, in June 1857, a party including five men of great influence had set out on horseback from Beersheba Springs to survey this location. They were Bishop Otey, Bishop Polk, Armfield, John M. Bass, and Vernon K. Stevenson; they rode to the vicinity of Coal Bank, site of the Sewanee Mining Company's first mines and thus on its branch railroad line. Having already found that this was not satisfactory coal land, Samuel F. Tracy was offering 5000 acres of it as a benefaction which would provide a vast domain for the proposed university. Franklin County men were offering another equally large tract adjacent to the Sewanee land. In behalf of his company, Tracy also pledged over a ten-year period 1,000,000 board feet of lumber, free transportation for building materials, and 20,000 tons of coal. These inducements—access to a railroad, abundance of



Beersheba Springs Hotel was in its heyday from 1858 to 1860.

beautiful forest land, and a supply of building materials and heating fuel—convinced even Armfield that what was to become the Sewanee vicinity was a preferable site for the university. A little later, to show his endorsement and in a typical display of his munificence, he pledged \$25,000 a year during his lifetime to the university.

And so, a goodly place for their seat of learning having been provided, all the bishops came together at Armfield's resort in that wonderful summer of 1859 to frame the charter. Their University of the South—in time to become affectionately known as "Sewanee"—would be built just a mile or two beyond the Grundy line in Franklin County. Yet what place contributed more to its inception than Grundy County? There it was, perhaps, that Bishop Polk conceived it; there that the mountain beauty of Beersheba Springs inspired Bishop Otey's vision of a proper setting; and, finally, from Grundy County that the land itself, along with the materials to build upon it, were given. Thus it is altogether fitting that what originally was named University Place in time should become Sewanee, after the Grundy County company which did so much to make the Episcopal university possible.

The Last Antebellum Year

In the year 1860 significant developments took place at Beersheba Springs and Tracy City. These involved changes in the corporate ownership both of the resort and the coal lands. Prior to what would prove to be the old order's last joyous season at the springs, the hotel changed hands. Though remaining very much a part of the community, Armfield sold the resort to the newly chartered Beersheba Springs Company for \$44,000. The incorporators of the company were Alexander Barrow, John M. Bass, Sterling Cockrill, C. G. Dahlgren, Benjamin Johnson, Minor Kenner, Oliver J. Morgan, Charles W. Phillips, A. Hamilton Polk, Lucius J. Polk, John Scarborough, John Waters, and Joseph S. Williams. The firm was capitalized at \$45,000, and 1500 shares of stock were sold at \$100 each.

In this transaction the Beersheba Springs Company acquired

the original tract, enlarged to 1880 acres and including the hotel and allied buildings, a saw mill, and the attractions of Beersheba's Spring and Laurel Falls. The company also received the Hanner cottage tract, the Smartt tract of 500 acres, and another tract of 1274 acres. Among the expensive appointments by this time in the hotel were fine billiard tables with felt-covered slate tops, silverware, and pieces of good furniture.

Miss Isabel Howell has written that the season of 1860 "must have been spectacular." The chef and all the servants were French, and there was also a French band from New Orleans to play for the dancing. The band provided glorious occasions—repeated often as there was such a crowd of guests arriving each day—by playing whenever a stagecoach was ascending the mountain. The signal to strike up came when the driver sounded his horn after halting his horses for a final blow. Following so wonderful a season, plans were afoot to spend another \$20,000 to improve the resort for 1861.

Meanwhile, things were not going so well for the Sewanee Mining Company. After laying the ten miles of railroad track from Coal Bank to Tracy City and putting down the new mine there, the investors found themselves \$400,000 in debt. Moreover, lacking experience in operating coal mines, they were having problems in getting miners and in selling what coal they did manage to produce.

The upshot was that creditors both in New York and in Tennessee filed suit to collect their investment. It was the Tennessee group—the Winchester contracting firm of B. F. McGhee and Company—represented by Arthur St. Clair Colyar, a Winchester man who rose after the war to great prominence in Nashville, which won the first judgment and bought in the property. In 1860 the company was reorganized as the Tennessee Coal and Railroad Company, with Colyar as president. The new firm's product, however, continued for many years to be called "Sewanee coal."

Besides the flourishing condition of the resort at Beersheba Springs and the reorganization of the troubled coal company at Tracy City, there is one other event of 1860 on the mountain to

be noted. This is the laying of the cornerstone for the University of the South. It was done on Wednesday, October 10, by Bishop Polk, with the help of Bishop Otey.

The Shipwreck of War (1861–1865)

Throughout the South—Tennessee and its Cumberland Plateau certainly included—life was sunny and hopeful. From time to time, it is true, storm clouds had been appearing on the horizon for more than a generation. Always, though, they had blown over. Then suddenly there came a thunderclap to end all thunderclaps, and behind it a storm blowing out of the North such as no one had ever felt. And when at last it had stormed itself out and the black cloud had broken up enough for folks to see again, they found that their world lay around them in pieces that never could be put back.

In the little part of that world of this history, the next time we catch a glimpse of Beersheba Springs, an army is riding through; then it is being looted of every pretty possession. The next we see of Tracy City, its mines and railroad have been seized by invaders; then it is being shot up and burned in a raid by counterattacking horsemen. And the next time we look for that historic cornerstone, we find that it has been exploded to smithereens.

The lightning struck November 6, 1860, with the election of Lincoln. Instantly there was a political crisis; seven states already had left the Union by the time the legislature, under the urging of Governor Isham Harris, set February 9, 1861, for a referendum to determine if Tennesseans also were of a mind to hold a secession convention. Speaking through the ballot, a substantial majority said, no, they were not. Only West Tennessee was ready to secede; East Tennessee was overwhelmingly opposed to the step, and Middle Tennessee narrowly so. With opinion thus divided, and with their state positioned between the antagonistic forces, Tennesseans spent two uneasy months, expecting a storm to break at any moment. It did, early the morning of

April 12, when firing erupted at Fort Sumter, South Carolina. More particularly, the future was sealed for Tennessee and three other border states—Virginia, North Carolina, and Arkansas—when Lincoln on April 15 called for 75,000 volunteers, as he said, “to cause the laws to be duly executed.” The governor of Tennessee instantly telegraphed his reply: “Tennessee will not furnish a single man for purposes of coercion, but 50,000 if necessary for the defense of our rights and those of our Southern brothers.”

Within days the legislature was back in session, and on May 6 its members drafted “A Declaration of Independence . . . Dissolving the Federal Relations between the State of Tennessee and the United States.” On June 8 Tennesseans were to return to the polls to ratify or reject. This vote showed plainly that in four months Lincoln had alienated in most of Tennessee the powerful sentiment for the Union. While East Tennessee opposed the Declaration by more than two to one, Middle Tennessee had undergone a revolution of public opinion and favored by seven to one; West Tennessee favored by five to one. The overall returns showed almost 70 per cent for the declaration. At this juncture in its history, Grundy County was decidedly Middle Tennessee in sentiment, as only nine citizens who went to the polls there June 8, 1861, opposed independence for their state.

Three Confederate Companies

To Grundy Countians, as to most Tennesseans, the outcome of the voting was a foregone conclusion. The very idea of Federal coercion had so put the fire in their eyes that, long before the balloting, a company of infantry had been enlisted in the county and even had reached Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, to serve in the command of Thomas J. (later Stonewall) Jackson. This outfit was Company A of Colonel Peter B. Turney’s First Tennessee Infantry, a regiment of the famed Tennessee Brigade, which fought on every major battlefield of the Virginia Theater. Most of the 91 officers and men of Company A were from Pel-

ham; smaller numbers came from Altamont and from nearby Hillsboro in Coffee County. They were enrolled by their company commander, Captain Alex E. Patton of Pelham, 61 years of age and the largest slaveholder in the county.

On the eve of the war in which the institution of slavery figured as such a prominent issue, the extent of slaveowning in Grundy County is noteworthy. The census of 1860 counted 3093 Grundians. Tax rolls of just a few years earlier show 46 men and four women owning an aggregate of 236 slaves. Allowing for a reasonable increase in this number between the compiling of the rolls and the taking of the census, we may surmise that blacks in servitude numbered by 1860 little more than 10 per cent of the population. The number of free colored persons was nominal—15 in 1850. Of the slaves, Patton himself owned 51, which he valued at \$22,300, or about \$440 apiece; John Armfield of Beersheba Springs owned 32, which he valued at \$19,750, or \$620 apiece. Owning more than one-third of the slaves between them, Patton and Armfield were the only local persons who might be counted among the so-called planter aristocracy of the antebellum South. Of the other slaveowners, W. G. Gunn possessed 13, John Gross 12, and Jesse Wooten 11; everyone else from one to eight—holdings which would place them all among the class of small slaveowners. This would be so even of an owner of such vast lands as Adrian Northcutt, who owned but five Negroes.

Few, if any, of the men whom Alex Patton enrolled May 8, 1861, for 12 months of military service owned any slaves at all; nor, it appears did any of their commissioned officers. On the day of enlistment these officers were: Lieutenant Joshua K. Warren, 33 years old, of Pelham; and Second Lieutenants Samuel Northcutt, 24, Altamont, and Benjamin F. Parks, 23, and George W. Parks, 52, both of Pelham. Noncommissioned officers included Sergeant Augustus Austill, 19, Pelham; Sergeant Riley Bradford Roberts, 37, Altamont; Sergeant Joseph G. Willis, 38, Pelham; and Corporals James H. Patton, 27, and Zebulon B. Tucker, 22, both of Pelham. Before the war ended, Sergeant Roberts attained the highest rank of any Grundy Countian un-

der arms; he made lieutenant colonel after transferring to the 35th Tennessee Infantry. In Company A itself, Jesse R. Gunn and Joseph A. Lusk reached the rank of captain and presumably exercised field command for a period.

The 1st Confederate Infantry, as it became, experienced long, hard service. It was at First Manassas (or Bull Run), the first great battle of the war, on July 21, 1861, and it was at Appomattox Courthouse when Lee surrendered on April 9, 1865. In the meantime, Turney's 1st had been everywhere: in 1862, in the Seven Days' Battles and with Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley; in 1863, at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg; and in the final years at The Wilderness, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg. Fourteen men of Company A are listed on the regimental memorial roll; an untold number were among the wounded of the war. County soldiers known to have perished while campaigning are Smart L. Smith of Altamont, who died at Camp Jones, Virginia, on August 11, 1861; Isaac Carnalison of Pelham, killed at Gettysburg on July 1, 1863; and Wootson L. Northcut (son of the renowned Adrian), who died May 10, 1864, after the Battle of the Wilderness.

Company A of the 35th Tennessee Infantry was another unit which was raised in Grundy County. It was mustered into service September 6–7, 1861, at Camp Smartt near McMinnville. At first it was part of a regiment called the Tennessee Mountain Rifles, composed of men from Grundy, Warren, Van Buren, Cannon, and Sequatchie counties. Company A was equipped by John Armfield, and in the beginning it was commanded by his nephew, Captain Albert C. Hanner. When Hanner was killed April 6, 1862, at Shiloh—a deadly battle in which the company was “in the thickest of the fight” and badly cut up—Riley B. Roberts was elevated to company commander. However, due probably to the number of casualties sustained at Shiloh, Company A was disbanded April 17, 1862, and its survivors distributed among the other companies in the regiment. These fought on at Corinth, Perryville, and Chickamauga, finally surrendering May 1, 1865, at Greensboro, North Carolina. Lieutenant Colo-

nel Roberts, by then a field officer, was taken prisoner at Missionary Ridge and served 16 months in the military prison at Johnson's Island.

The first noncommissioned officers of Company A were Noah Bost, John Dugan, Henry C. Fults, and James L. Nite, sergeants; and P. K. Countess, Robert Dykes, Isaiah Morton, and C.G.S. Tate, corporals. The company roster is replete with surnames native to Grundy County—Argo, Brown, Coppinger, Gross, Hobbs, Killian, Layne, Levan, Lockhart, Nunley, Overturff, Smartt, Smith, Turner, and Walker.

A smaller number of Grundy County men served with Coffee Countians in Company B (Company K after the reorganization which followed Shiloh) of the 44th Tennessee Infantry Regiment, which was organized at Camp Trousdale in Sumner County late in 1861. The first commander of Company B was Captain William L. Parks of Pelham. After its reorganization Company K was commanded by Captain John Robert Oliver, possibly a Grundy man, as was William C. Nunley, who died on duty early in the war. The 44th, which was commanded by the intrepid Colonel John S. Fulton of Fayetteville, endured terribly hard service beginning at Shiloh. There the 44th went into battle Sunday, April 6, 1862, with 470 men; on Tuesday, roll call was answered by only 120 able survivors. The regiment later fought at Perryville, Chickamauga, and Knoxville before being transferred to Virginia for the last months of the war. It was surrendered at Appomattox.

Besides the men who enlisted in the three infantry companies which have been cited, some few county men were scattered among other units. Those who favored the horse soldier's life would have ridden off to war and attached themselves to cavalry outfits. Andrew J. Lockhart of Altamont, for example, rode with the 4th Tennessee Cavalry. Also, Alexander H. Sanders, later sheriff of Grundy County, is reported to have left Turney's Regiment after Gettysburg, returned home, and recruited cavalry in the county which served out the war under Forrest. Most, though, fought with one of the three infantry regiments: 1st Confederate, 35th Tennessee, or 44th Tennessee.

Wartime at Beersheba Springs

While the soldiers of Grundy County fought in far-flung battles, life at home maintained some show of normality until the summer of 1863. Then Federal forces, deflected for more than a year, were able to sustain their advance from Nashville toward Chattanooga along the line of the railroad. By July invading troops held the mountain in sway.

Exactly a year earlier, however, relative peace still prevailed, and the plateau served as a refuge for hard-pressed families of upper Middle Tennessee. In Beersheba Springs, John Armfield continued to preside in wartime as he had in peace. According to one account, "Too old for active duty, he called up the neighboring mountaineers of Grundy County, equipped and put into the field a company, and took care of their families while they were away." He and Mrs. Armfield opened their home to such distinguished, war-weary guests as Governor Isham Harris and Judge Bromfield Ridley.

In July of 1862 the people of the mountain enjoyed a signal opportunity to display loyalty and affection for their army. The general who at this time led his cavalry over the Cumberland Plateau was not yet famous, but he was about to become so. On July 6 Bedford Forrest left Chattanooga with about a thousand men to carry out raids in Middle Tennessee which would throw Federal operations into confusion. This body of men bivouacked at Altamont sometime Thursday, July 10. The force then proceeded to Beersheba. There the people cheered them on their way, and Mrs. Armfield had several sacks of coffee opened from which to fill the haversack of every orderly for his mess. The horsemen proceeded to a rendezvous near Sparta with other units, then turned west and carried out a raid, sensational in its success, on the Federal garrison at Murfreesboro.

A year later to the month, there came a day—probably Sunday, July 26—when Beersheba Springs again was crowded with people who did not belong to the place; but this time they were unwelcome persons up to no good. An account of what took place on this occasion has been left by Mrs. Bettie Ridley Black-

more, a lady of Murfreesboro who, unwell and hoping to rally in the mountain air, had come to the springs with a party of refugees. On July 6 they barely escaped McMinnville ahead of the invading Federal troops.

Three years before, the day of their arrival would have seen the resort at the height of its season. But now the hotel and the "25 to 30 furnished cottages belonging mostly to wealthy Southerners" were occupied by ten families at most. Among these was a Mr. Ryan, superintendent of the resort area. Also, Mrs. Blackmore wrote, John Armfield "lived on the mountain dispensing charity & hospitality to the poor & rich with . . . a lavish hand." She observed, though, that this show of wealth made him "a high mark of plunder." When the Yankees came riding up, he was obliged to feed them "man and beast." Some of his valuables he is said to have kept hidden in a chestnut stump.

Those who made life on the mountain so very precarious and who initiated the practice of looting empty cottages were the notorious bushwhackers—guerrillas both Unionist and Confederate, desperadoes, and conscript dodgers. Such men, Mrs. Blackmore wrote, "visited Beersheba almost daily, stealing everything they could transport in wagons." They carried off furniture from the cottages, plundered the hotel, and rustled horses. These bushwhackers also incited the native mountaineers to take part in a three-day orgy of looting, which began in the resort that last Sunday in July. Their story was that, since Federal troops were on their way to burn the place anyway, the people might just as well take what they could. Federal authorities later denied any complicity in what occurred. Here is Mrs. Blackmore's description of the Sunday morning scene:

"The whole town was full by breakfast of men, women & children—wagons, etc., with 7 or 8 armed bushwhackers. Each person or generally 2 or 3 persons went to a cottage & set claim to anything they might desire—stayed by it day and night until they had it taken to their huts in the mountain."

Mrs. Blackmore and her friends went out and mixed with the looters to satisfy their curiosity as to how folk not given to theft might justify what they were doing. Some echoed the bush-

whackers: Since the Yankees are “coming to burn up the town tomorrow . . . , we thought we would take these things and take care of them.” Those who numbered cottagers among their friends may have done just that. However, another woman gave voice to the envy and antipathy, usually suppressed, which some mountaineers surely have felt through the years toward the relatively wealthy summer people. She said, “What a pity the Southerners broke up this Union—they’ll lose their fine things for it.”

Several days later, Mrs. Blackmore rode with some other ladies out into the country to see what use was being made of the stolen articles. In one-room dwellings they found “the lofts were cut out in places, to allow the wardrobes and china presses or tall bedsteads to sit up & all the meat they had hung up in the wardrobes. The looking glasses were broken out of the bureaus as useless . . . & chinaware, books, set in the loft, under the bed, stuck in cracks, etc. I saw an elegant china tureen full of walnut dye.”

There is little wonder that in the midst of the war John Armfield should remark to his trusted artisan Ben Cagle that it was “the worst shipwreck I have ever seen.”

Bledsoe’s Raid on Tracy City

Twenty miles to the south, meanwhile, Tracy City was under occupation, having fallen into Federal hands soon after the army of General William S. Rosecrans occupied Cowan and Decherd the first days of July. To garrison the place, Lieutenant Colonel William B. Wooster had detached Company B of his 20th Connecticut Volunteers, whose headquarters were at Decherd. The company had two officers—Captain Andrew Upson and Second Lieutenant Theodore Jepson—and 72 men.

The Confederates had sent locomotives and cars of the Tracy City branch line to the south before the occupation, but the U.S. Government succeeded in leasing the property of the Tennessee Coal and Railroad Company to F. O. Howard and Company. A stockade for Company B was erected so as to defend the company trading establishment, known as Howard and Benham’s store. These structures were near the present county garage.

Federal officers had their headquarters nearby in the old Jim O'Neal home at the corner of Coke and Colyar.

For some months the occupation passed without incident. Early in December 1863 Federal authorities organized a somewhat ragtag company of cavalry in Grundy County. It appears to have been made up of some local men of genuine Unionist sentiment, but also of Confederate deserters and scalawags. Company E of the 1st Alabama and Tennessee Vedette Cavalry Regiment, U.S.A., was commanded by Captain Stephen P. Tipton of Altamont (presumably the early alderman there) and had a strength of 73 men. Of this outfit, however, Lieutenant Colonel Wooster said, "None . . . are armed—except some half-dozen with squirrel rifles—none mounted, and none of the slightest service." It is worth noting that another company commander in this Vedette Cavalry was one Calvin Brixey, the most notorious bushwhacker in the annals of Grundy County. For generations after he committed his wartime depredations, the worst epithet which could be hurled at anyone locally was "Brixeyite."

Once southern Kentucky and Middle Tennessee had been occupied by the Federal army, outposts like Tracy City developed a false sense of security. However, a campaign little known to history was conducted by detached Confederate cavalry through the fall of 1863 and the winter of 1864 which caused such garrisons to realize that they were not immune from attack. The leaders of this campaign were Colonel John M. Hughes (sometimes Hughes), about 32 years old, of Livingston, and Major Willis Scott Bledsoe, about 27, of Jamestown. On August 16, 1863, General Braxton Bragg ordered Hughes on a mission into occupied Middle Tennessee "for the purpose of collecting absentees . . . and with authority . . . to enforce conscription." In the process his detachment got cut off from the main army, at which point Hughes decided: "The least we could employ ourselves at was operating against the enemy, whose presence had greatly emboldened the Union Tories, and they were becoming very troublesome—going in bands, robbing and murdering citizens and soldiers. To furnish these villains with a little fighting was necessary." Hughes soon expanded his aim; and with 106 of-

ficers and men he began a series of actions in the enemy's rear—one of sensational outcome October 6 at Glasgow, Kentucky, when he captured 226 men, 200 horses, and goods worth a quarter million dollars.

Soon after this success Hughs was joined by Major Bledsoe and his company of cavalry. During General Joe Wheeler's raid through Middle Tennessee of October 1–9, Bledsoe's troop was dispatched to burn the depot at McMinnville and then found themselves cut off from their army. Turning northward toward Fentress County and home, Scott Bledsoe learned about Hughs and reported to him. By December 8 Hughs and Bledsoe were operating together with a peak force of 200 men when they struck Scottsville, Kentucky, with results similar to those at Glasgow. After a few more forays, the severe cold of January 1864 caused Hughs to divide his command—he to operate in Overton County, Bledsoe in White—and again limit activities to “hunting down bushwhackers and tories.”

Not many days passed before Bledsoe received intelligence about such “tories” in Grundy County, and of the isolated garrison at the Tracy City mines. This word could have been relayed by John Orange, a Confederate guerrilla reputed to have operated in the county. It also is possible that an appeal to Bledsoe was occasioned by the fact that early in January Calvin Brixey had been dispatched to Tracy City and was using his orders—“to pick up stragglers”—as an excuse to commit murder. By whatever means and on whatever account, Bledsoe did learn of local circumstances, and on Tuesday, January 19, he was leading his men, numbering perhaps 100, south from White County. Since they were in Altamont by ten o'clock the morning of the 20th, the horsemen probably made camp the night before in Collins River Valley, possibly at the foot of Beersheba Mountain.

Their business in Altamont they completed expeditiously. The troopers rode to the dwelling of Captain Tipton—in their eyes certainly, as commander of the Vedette company, a “Union tory”—summoned him outdoors, and shot him dead. A private in Tipton's company, David Franklin, also was reported killed while Bledsoe's force was in Altamont. Then the cavalry streamed

southward along Higginbotham's Turnpike, which Tipton's men were supposed to be picketing but were not. Thus the Confederate raiders were enabled to pull off another in their long series of surprise attacks.

Covering the 15 miles from Altamont to Tracy City, Bledsoe's cavalymen were on the road three hours. At about one o'clock in the afternoon, they suddenly rode in from behind Howard and Benham's store. According to Lieutenant Colonel Wooster's report, "The sentinel discharged his piece, but so rapid was the movement . . . that no alarm reached the camp until the whole force rode in." Shooting broke out; a horseman fired at the sentinel but hit instead a Connecticut soldier nearby named David B. Powell, who was mortally wounded. Storekeeper Benham commenced shooting from his store and claimed to have wounded two Confederates.

At this point, assuming that supplies were a prime object of his raid, Major Bledsoe made a tactical mistake. He turned his men away from an immediate assault on the store, then little protected, and made for the depot about 250 yards away. This movement enabled many Federal soldiers to reach the safety of the stockade. However, the Confederates intercepted their commander, Captain Upson, and 10 men between the depot and the stockade; and after an exchange of fire in which Upson was twice wounded, the encircled Yankees surrendered.

Their prisoners under guard, the raiders turned back to the stockade, now to find that Lieutenant Jepson had his force under cover. The Confederates dismounted and formed a line of battle along sheltered high ground in front of the stockade. The Federals did not dare to venture forth because of withering fire, but neither would they submit to any of three surrender proposals which Major Bledsoe sent in to Lieutenant Jepson under a flag of truce. These, Lieutenant Colonel Wooster later reported, had "in view the possession of the store." Bledsoe finally decided to tarry no longer with fruitless negotiations, and as was his practice began to destroy anything which might be of value to the enemy. He ordered his men to fire the depot, the engine-

house, and the buildings covering the coal chutes; and these were burnt to the ground.

Next, on that January afternoon of what had been a very cold winter, Bledsoe claimed what of value he had in hand; namely, the overcoats and blankets of his prisoners. Then he paroled them. The Confederates' business in Tracy City now was finished, but they remained in position around the stockade till darkness fell. About four hours after surprising the garrison, Bledsoe's cavalry remounted and melted away to the north. They rode about seven miles to the place of one David Nunley, where they encamped for the night. While the raiders slept, a Federal relief force of 100 men arrived by rail from Cowan, but no attempt was made at pursuit.

Though not so successful, because of failure to carry the store, as most of the Hughs-Bledsoe raids, the movement into Grundy County achieved most of the aims the commanders had been pursuing for four months behind enemy lines. First, they were seeking out Tennessee Unionists, and the chief of these in Grundy County, Captain Tipton, they killed. Second, they were seizing the supplies which were of value to those in the outposts they attacked and destroying the rest. Although they obtained precious little goods from Tracy City, they did render the place useless for a time as a source of coal. Third, they were capturing as many prisoners as they could round up and paroling them, and in this raid they bagged 11. Finally, they were aiming to catch Federal commanders off guard and show them how precarious was their hold on the remote outposts of Kentucky and Tennessee; in this they were, as ever, successful.

However, on returning to Grundy County two months later with their commands reunited, Colonel Hughs and Major Bledsoe were not so lucky. Riding again from White County on about March 15, they passed through Collins River Valley, ascended the mountain at Beersheba, and descended it into Pelham Valley on their way to tear up track and attack a train between Tullahoma and Estill Springs. The raid itself was accomplished, but at breakfast on March 18, the Confederates, encamped below Beersheba Springs, were surprised for the only time in their

long campaign behind the lines. Slipping up on them were U.S. soldiers who had been in pursuit since their departure from White County. In the melee which took place, Hughs' command lost at least two men killed and probably some horses, as well as saddles, clothing, and the like. The worst of the loss from Colonel Hughs' standpoint was a haversack containing valuable papers, including his record of \$47,000 in expenses for the support of his command. No end of trouble resulted. Almost a year later, on January 19, 1865, Scott Bledsoe was writing a letter to Confederate authorities in support of Hughs' claim for reimbursement. In it he mentioned the haversack lost in the Collins River Valley.

The reversal below Beersheba was the decisive event persuading Hughs that it was time to make his way, if possible, back to the main body of the army. Accordingly, moving through the lines in small parties, the commands of Hughs and Bledsoe managed to arrive safely at Dalton, Georgia, on April 20, eight months after Bragg had ordered Hughs into Middle Tennessee. Even his opponents called Hughs "a brave, vigilant, and energetic officer," whose men did no pillaging but stuck to the business of soldiering.

The *Official Records* list another "Skirmish at Tracy City" as taking place August 4, 1864, but contain no reports detailing what happened. Less than a year later, defeated soldiers were returning home, and the mountain must have been an inviting hermitage to the survivors of so terrible a war. Even one of the invading 20th Connecticut Volunteers chose to settle there. He was a soldier named Barnett, who, so the story goes, courted and married one of the Linton girls of Tracy City and settled in the midst of his old enemies.

In time, the "boys of '61" would form an active local chapter of the United Confederate Veterans; they, with their companion United Daughters of the Confederacy, would continue until well into the twentieth century to hold social gatherings and decorate graves. As late as June 3, 1916, near the 55th anniversary of Tennessee's "declaration of independence" from the Union, one bewhiskered Grundy County veteran, J. C. Henley of Valley

Home, is known to have joined other grizzled Confederates parading down Union Street in Nashville.

Two Postwar Settlements (1867–1883)

The Swiss Colony

Following John Armfield's death on September 20, 1871, the Grundy County Quarterly Court published a memorial signed by J. M. Bouldin, chairman, and John Scruggs, secretary. Juxtaposed to the tribute that Armfield was "the warm and steadfast friend of all improvements" is this statement: "There can be no dispute but what he settled the Swiss Colony in Grundy County." Armfield's part in encouraging the interest of agents of the Swiss Emigration Society in the Cumberland Plateau was an endeavor almost as far-reaching in the postwar period as developing Beersheba Springs and locating the University of the South had been in antebellum years.

Compared with that of some other European countries of like size and population, emigration from Switzerland to North America has not been great. Up to 1920 only about a quarter million Swiss had come to the United States; whereas five times that many Irish came during the 1847–1854 potato famine period alone. Yet in a populous rural country where arable land is limited by mountainous topography, groups from time to time have set out in search of more abundant land. This—and not religious intolerance or political unrest—seems to have provided the impulse which led the Swiss Emigration Society in 1867 to dispatch Captain Eugen H. Plumacher to the United States for the purpose of locating a place of settlement.

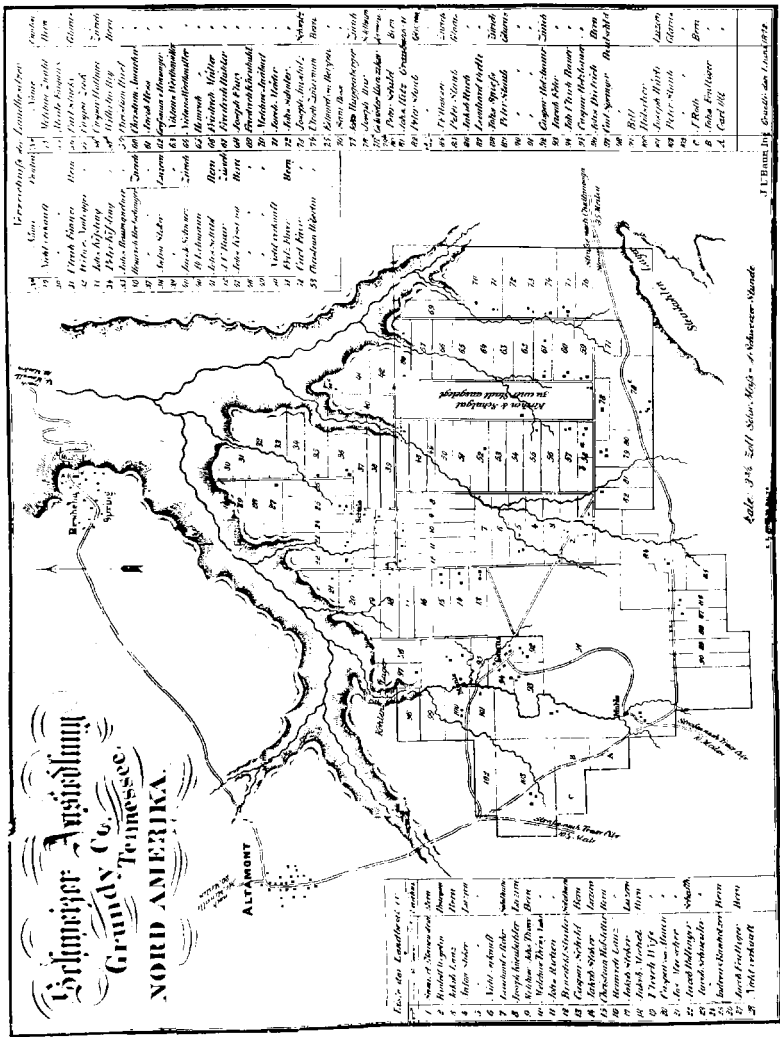
In May of 1868 Plumacher, with John Hitz, general consul and political agent for the Swiss Republic, called on President Andrew Johnson before leaving the capital on his quest. A Tennessean, Johnson asked as a favor to himself that Plumacher visit his state before choosing a location. Plumacher agreed and ere long he found himself—perhaps through mutual Nashville connections—at Beersheba Springs in the company of John Arm-

field. By the time he left the Armfield home, Plumacher had been sold on the locale. The plateau reminded him of his native land. Even if it was still very much a forest wilderness, land was in abundance and, in those penurious postwar days, cheap. Plumacher converted to his way of thinking both Consul Hitz and Peter Staub, a Swiss businessman settled at Knoxville.

Responsibility for purchasing the land in behalf of the Swiss fell to Staub, who bought up about 15,000 acres a few miles south of Beersheba. He subdivided most of this land into 100-acre lots but reserved a large tract of choice ground for himself; also, to his credit, Staub set aside two small tracts and a large one of more than 500 acres for church and school uses. He then had circulars printed and distributed, ballyhooing soil of marvelous fertility, a growing season which knew no end, and a climate of wonderful salubriousness. To top all, as much land as one might wish in this Eden could be had for 50 cents an acre!

The men who rose to this bait were farmers and artisans of the German-speaking cantons of the north of Switzerland. As many were from Berne as the other cantons together, but there were also large groups from Zurich and from Glarus, in which was located the commune of Grütli that gave its name to the Swiss town in Grundy County. A sprinkling of colonists also came from the cantons of Aargau, Lucerne, Schaffhausen, Schwyz, Solothurn, and Thurgau. The oldest map of the Swiss Colony shows the tracts apportioned among about 80 separate buyers, but the full number of families which came for some period of time in the first years of the settlement may have reached 100. The historic date of the arrival of the first colonists is April 11, 1869.

Among those first Swiss settlers were the forebears of families which have achieved eminence in Grundy County, some prominent to this day. These include the Amachers, Angsts, Banholzers, Flurys, Hunzikers, Schilds, Scholers, and von Bergens, who were followed shortly by such other well known Swiss families as the Greeters, Maruggs, Werners, and Wichsers. The family which had the distinction of bringing forth the first infant born to colonists in Tennessee was that of Andreas Banholzer.



Early map of Swiss Colony

Born in 1870, Kaspar A. Banholzer was known as “Cap” during his mature years when he was a successful businessman in Tracy City, one of his enterprises there being the Coca-Cola franchise. A grandson of Andreas Banholzer is a talented musician—Albert Bonholzer of Tracy City, who for many years has been carillonneur of the University of the South.

To say that the first Swiss colonists were disappointed when they reached the Cumberland Plateau would be an understatement. They had left their native country, traveled over land and sea thousands of miles to reach New York, journeyed hundreds of miles farther by train (and perhaps steamboat) to reach Nashville, boarded the Nashville and Chattanooga line for Tullahoma and changed there to the McMinnville branch, and finally taken a stagecoach up the mountain where they were expecting to make a new home in the midst of broad fields ready for cultivation. Instead, they found that they had bought tracts of forest land in a mountain wilderness. In the moment these folk discovered their true circumstances, Eugen Plumacher and Peter Staub were not the most popular names among the Swiss immigrants.

Their bitter disappointment led some of the colonists to turn back to the East, or even to Switzerland. Others eventually migrated to nearby communities, a number to Winchester and Belvidere in Franklin County. Most, however, pitched in and made the best of their new surroundings. By November 22, 1870, there was a post office at Gruetli. Within five years of settlement, Christian Marugg—who had returned to Switzerland to bring out more families—was postmaster and storekeeper. The Chattanooga Stage Road ran through the settlement, leaving the Higginbotham Turnpike south of Altamont and turning eastward through the Swiss Colony, descending the mountain some miles beyond through Star Gap, crossing the Sequatchie Valley, and ascending Walden Ridge en route to Chattanooga.

It did not take long for the mountain land to begin to bring forth an abundant yield in response to the labor of the hard-working Swiss. Using oxen to draw their plows, they cultivated such crops as wheat, rye, corn, and potatoes. They raised beef

cattle, which they sometimes drove to Sewanee and sold at 2½ cents a pound; each family maintained a dairy, a chief product of which was the cheese that gained a wide reputation for excellence. Neither was any farm lacking a vineyard, and to this day it is wine made by Swiss descendants which is used for communion by the churches favored with their membership. P. G. Favel was the first Gruetli winemaker. By 1886 Jacob Fehr and Christian Marugg had won a prize for their superior wine at an agricultural fair in New Orleans.

Partly to overcome the language barrier which the German-speaking Swiss met in America, they established the Swiss Colony School. Among the early teachers were Rudolph Marugg (son of Christian) and Charles Nussbaum. The school was founded by the Gruetli Club, members of which paid dues that were used for the teacher's salary. The Swiss Colony School burned in 1928 and was rebuilt as the Gruetli School. In 1972 the consolidated Swiss Memorial School was erected by Grundy County on a tract that Peter Staub had set aside for school purposes a century before.

The Swiss colonists were Protestant, members of the Swiss Reformed Church; the Swiss Colony schoolhouse doubled as the community's place of worship. Some years following settlement an insurgent group of disciples of Emanuel Swedenborg tried to take over the church building. The upshot was a lawsuit which the Swiss Reformed group won. In the meantime, however, the communion has disappeared from Grundy County. Descendants have scattered among other denominations, more to the Episcopal Church than any other. The Colony Cemetery, situated on other ground made available by Peter Staub, continues in use.

By the census of 1880, the native Swiss in Grundy County numbered 227, more than could be found in any other county in Tennessee. Out-migration began early, however, for by 1890 there were but 140 native Swiss in the county. At Gruetli today only a few descendants are to be found—families like the Nussbaums, Schlageters, Scholers, Stampflis (still known for their cheeses), and Suters. In Tracy City are offspring—now into the

fourth generation—of Bonholzers, Flurys, Greeters, Schilds, and Werners; there also are members of the Baggenstoss and Kunz families, who are of Swiss descent but reached Grundy County by paths which differed from that of the colonists.

The Swiss have been influential in the commercial life of Grundy County out of proportion to their numbers. The names of Greeter and Werner have been associated with lumber, von Bergen with furniture, Flury with groceries, Marugg with implement manufacture, Baggenstoss with baking, Kunz with construction, and so on. In addition, beyond the bounds of the county, an early colonist named Melchior Thoni became one of the most famous woodcarvers of Tennessee, executing the carvings in the old Governor's Mansion and the altar of Christ Church, edifices in Nashville. A Swiss descendant who was a native of Gruetli, Peter R. Olgati, became mayor of Chattanooga in the 1950s and then a candidate for governor.

As for the three men who were most influential in locating the Swiss Colony in Grundy County, there is a sequel to be told regarding each. John Armfield died within two years of the founding of the colony and was buried in Armfield Cemetery across the road and just a few steps down from the house he had bought from Buck White. Beside him is Nathan Bracken, who drove his master up Broad Mountain that day in 1854, and who lived as a freedman in Beersheba Springs for more than half a century before dying in 1918. Eugen Plumacher built a rambling house in Beersheba Springs called "Dan," and later served as U.S. consul to Venezuela from 1877 till his death in 1910. Dan now is the home of Plumacher's grandson, Eugene Bohr. Peter Staub was elected mayor of Knoxville in 1875, 1876, and 1881 and died there in 1904 at age 77 from injuries sustained in a carriage accident.

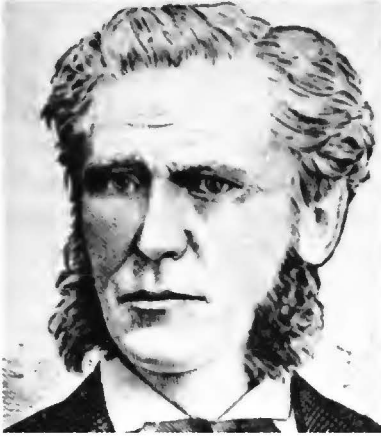
John Moffat and the Monteagle Assembly

The formative years of the Swiss Colony coincided with the beginnings of Monteagle, noted for the past century as a summer resort and in its early decades as "The Chautauqua of the South." This town is in the extreme southwest of Grundy

County; it is so near the county line, in fact, that the part of Monteagle south of the railroad tracks lies in Marion County. However, its municipal offices, the Monteagle Sunday School Assembly, and DuBose (Episcopal) Conference Center all are in Grundy County, as are the scenic lookouts into Elk River Valley.

The site of Monteagle is a narrow neck of the Cumberland Plateau which, from Indian times to the present, has afforded travelers a short passage over the mountain. Hundreds of years ago the Cisca and St. Augustine Trail passed nearby; today Interstate 24, modern successor to U.S. Highway 41, does the same. Thus for most of its history Monteagle has profited from being where the main highway between Nashville and Chattanooga crosses the plateau. Along Interstate 24 it is about 85 miles southeast from Nashville and about 45 miles northwest from Chattanooga.

To one individual goes the credit for founding the place which for some years bore his own name and since has borne the name which he gave it. He is John Moffat, who began life November 9, 1828, in Glasgow, Scotland, one of three children of a then well-to-do family. However, the Moffat fortune was lost in a financial panic when John was about six and the family emigrated to Canada. It is possible that in the aftermath of his reversal, John's father turned to drink; it is certain that soon after reaching Canada, he deserted his family. Moreover, the farmer who adopted the Scottish lad whose people had fallen on hard times seems also to have been given to drink and was abusive under its influence. In consequence, John Moffat was susceptible to the temperance appeal and at the age of nine signed a pledge after hearing an apostle of the movement preach. Temperance, which urged upon its adherents not just moderation in the use of spirits but total abstinence, was one of many movements which began to sweep the North beginning in the 1830s. Among other tenets being preached were women's suffrage, abolition, and prison and asylum reform, along with such enthusiasms as spiritualism, millennialism, and Shakerism. After earning a high school diploma, qualifying for a teaching certificate, and working his way through college Moffat himself became a tem-



John Moffatt
Founder of Monteagle



Eugen Plumacher
Founder of Swiss Colony

perance preacher. In the meantime, his beloved mother had died and he had located his long-lost father and converted him to the cause.

John Moffat already had been active as a lecturer and publicist and as an organizer of the temperance movement for 20 years when he was invited in 1868 to leave Canada and take charge of the Temperance Alliance in Ohio. He accepted this call, but it seems that his message was in advance of such sentiment in that state, for the work did not get off the ground. Moreover, as Moffat wrote later, his effort had cost him "a year and a half's toil and several thousands of dollars" and still he owed debts on the Alliance. It is not known what caused John Moffat to select the Cumberland Plateau as his retreat when the work in Ohio failed. It is known, though, that on May 9, 1870, he purchased 1146 acres of almost unbroken forest where Monteagle is today and, at the age of 41, moved there with his wife and children.

Almost at once the reformer bent his mind and effort to making the beautiful land he had come to possess serve the ends of social uplift. He gave 50 acres for a women's college and in

1873 persuaded two Mississippi ladies—Mrs. Maria Louise Yerger and a Mrs. Kells—to start up Fairmount Female College. Several years later, when each had been widowed, Mrs. Yerger and the famed Sewanee theologian, William Porcher DuBose, were married. Together, until 1917, they operated the college which, according to Moultrie Guerry, “furnished many a Southern woman with an education and many a Sewanee man with a wife.” Fairmount’s most famous matriculant perhaps—there for a summer session—was not a Southern woman but one of the famous Soong sisters of China, who later became Madame Chiang Kai-shek.

Moffat next began to work toward an end which was even closer to his heart. Remembering his own difficulties in making a start in life, he wanted to establish a “collegiate and normal institute” for aspiring persons who had been forced to discontinue their schooling for lack of funds.

Before proceeding to this part of Moffat’s story, however, note should be taken of the settlement where his labors now centered. On January 18, 1871, a post office called Moffat Station was established there and Oliver D. Mabee appointed its first postmaster. “Station” presumably was suffixed to the founder’s name because the place was on the branch line of the Tennessee Coal and Railroad Company, but by October 15, 1874, the post office was simply Moffat. A man named Robbins is reported to have erected a steam sawmill—the first in the area—at Moffat in the 1870s. From the great chestnut and poplar logs first sawed out, those eight feet in diameter might yield 1800 board feet of lumber! The modesty of John Moffat may have been a factor in changing the name of the town on January 12, 1881, to Mont Eagle, after the English nobleman Lord Mouteagle, who was a friend of Moffat’s. Not until October 1, 1925, was the present spelling adopted—Monteagle.

The place, though, still was Moffat when, on August 18, 1876, the State of Tennessee issued a charter of incorporation to The Moffat Collegiate and Normal Institute “for the purpose of establishing a college with power to confer degrees and a normal school for the special training of teachers.” Again Moffat

donated land, and this time he also purchased a building—used previously as a resort hotel and located on the eventual site of the Sunday School Assembly—which would accommodate 100 boarding students. Beyond this beginning Moffat's institute failed to develop, but the idea of its founder to provide training for teachers would come to fruition through cross-fertilization with an uplift program of the late nineteenth century.

The first assembly of the Chautauqua movement was held in August of 1874 at Camp Fair Point on the shores of Lake Chautauqua, New York. It represented the fulfillment of the thought and labor of two men, Dr. John H. Vincent and Lewis Miller, whose purpose was to advance the Sunday School movement by means of a summer training institute for teachers. Their program also featured lectures and entertainments, the idea being that the pleasures of vacationing in a summer camp would enhance the values to be gained from serious study.

The fame of Chautauqua spread quickly. By April of 1882 Dr. J. H. Warren was proposing to the State Sunday School Convention, meeting at Murfreesboro, an independent Chautauqua for Tennessee. To discuss this subject he called for a meeting of delegates that summer "along the Chattanooga railroad between Murfreesboro and Chattanooga." This congress convened August 17–19 at Tullahoma; the delegates appointed a committee of eight, headed by R. B. Reppard, to choose a site.

A group representing Monteagle persuaded the committee to inspect their town. Inspiring speaker that he was, John Moffat surely made the formal appeal; with him on the occasion were George King and Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Francis. Besides Monteagle, however, the Reppard committee also answered calls for proposed sites at Chattanooga, Sewanee, Shelbyville, and Tullahoma in Tennessee; from Atlanta and Tallulah Falls in Georgia; and from Greenville and King's Mountain in South Carolina. A decision was reached in Atlanta on September 18, 1882, when the committee accepted Monteagle's bid. The inducements included: the 100 acres of land which always have formed a part of the domain of the Monteagle Sunday School Assembly, an additional 1000 acres of timber land in the vicinity of the present



Tracy City branch passenger train standing at old Monteagle depot (circa 1906) with hacks ready to deliver guests to the Sunday School Assembly.

headquarters of the South Cumberland Recreation Area (sold during the 1930s depression), and two bonuses of \$5000—one from John Moffat himself and the other from the Tennessee Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company (TCI), then just acquired and reorganized by John H. Inman of New York. Monteagle also boasted what has been called a “near-perfect Chautauqua location.” It was far enough away from cities to provide a sense of escape, and the encompassing forest and the cool mountain air provided a retreat-like atmosphere. And yet it was on a railroad line, which enabled guests to reach Monteagle with ease.

The Monteagle Sunday School Assembly was incorporated in Grundy County on October 31, 1882. Its purposes, as stated in the charter, were “advancement of science, literary attainment, Sunday School interests, and promotion of the broadest popular culture in the interest of Christianity without regard to sect or denomination.” R. B. Reppard was elected the Assembly’s first president; vice-presidents were chosen from 11 states—Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. Life memberships were offered for \$25 to laymen and \$10 to ministers; lots, with 99-year leases, sold for \$75. Officers also employed a resident engineer.

The first Sunday School Assembly opened at Monteagle July 17, 1883, and each summer since there has been a program on the grounds. More than 1000 persons attended some part of that first season—many of them camping in the 60 family tents which had been provided and making use of “orchard plumbing,” others boarding in the original Monteagle Hotel. The normal school attracted 150 teachers to its institute. A highlight of the program was a three-day visit from Dr. Vincent, cofounder of the Chautauqua movement.

This initial success persuaded the Assembly trustees to press forward. They bought the hotel, complete with furnishings, and 200 additional acres for \$14,000, and they began to encourage leaseholders to build cottages. Nashville became the first community to erect a boarding house for its teachers. This was followed by a Memphis home, a Mississippi home, and an especially

lovely Alabama home. By 1901 the trustees had completed the building of a chapel, called Warren Hall, and an auditorium. The latter, designed in the Chautauqua fashion by Morrison H. Vail, was a 20-sided polygon, 140 feet in diameter, its permanent walls just 2½ feet high, with sliding panels.

Assembly programs developed as rapidly as the facilities. In 1887, for example, among the speakers were Frances E. Willard, president of the National Women's Christian Temperance Union (unfortunately John Moffat had died the previous Christmas and so was not present to hear her); George Washington Cable, author of *Old Creole Days* and founder of the self-improvement Home Culture clubs; and Professor W. M. Baskervill of Vanderbilt University. In addition, a Sunday School Congress was held, a Temperance Week observed, and 19 separate schools conducted. For entertainment there were the Nashville Italian Band, the Tulip Street Quartette, and Lohmann's Cincinnati Orchestra. And then the walks through the beautiful woods were grand, as were camping trips down into the Elk River Valley. In succeeding seasons such renowned figures spoke at the Assembly as William Jennings Bryan and Governor Robert Love Taylor.

Mrs. Bess Lyon Cox Eager, who was present for about 90 Assembly seasons, beginning with that of 1888, has drawn from her lively memory a delightful picture of its early decades. In a 1974 interview she recalled: "The place was just filled with teachers. Every night in the auditorium there were heavy lectures. On Sunday you were quiet as could be. I was always so tickled when it was over."

Mrs. Eager drew this scene of the mall as it would be following "the quiet hour" which was observed after weekday dinners: "There would be everyone dressed up—the ladies in their 19-gore skirts with double ruffles, and the servants in their little white hats, pushing the baby carriages." By then all would have had time to recover from the abundant dinners taken at the boarding houses, in themselves quite a drawing card because it meant the women did not have to cook. Speaking of dinnertime, Mrs. Eager said, "There was a great big old dinner bell. You

could hear it ring all over the grounds,” summoning the Lyons and other families to meals of “fresh vegetables right out of the garden, chicken, and lots of desserts—pies mostly.” The vegetables had been harvested from the gardens of farmers who “came in at the back gate from the Elk River Valley.” In the evenings ladies and gentlemen would be drawn to sit together at the Assembly Inn on the mall where there was, Mrs. Eager said, “a nice long verandah with worlds of nice rocking chairs and worlds of nice gossip.”

The Monteagle Assembly was at its zenith from 1900 to 1913. Thereafter, being forced to compete with college summer terms—such as those of George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville—along with other factors produced a decline. By the war-time summer of 1918, there was doubt that the Assembly would be able to conduct a program, though it did manage to survive. About the same time, persons of the founding generation began to sense that the Assembly was changing. Certain qualities essential to the original pattern were beginning to languish: the tone of sobriety and quiet dignity, endeavors to foster personal culture, formal attire, good manners.

The Monteagle Sunday School Assembly has since evolved into a summer resort for descendants of its early patrons and others who have come to love the beauty and serenity of Cumberland Mountain. Yet some of the early features still remain: lectures, twilight prayers, musical activities, a kindergarten, arts and crafts, and so on. A few blocks to the east, old Fairmount College now is DuBose Conference Center. Times have changed strikingly since John Moffat’s day; yet the two legacies he bequeathed the town he founded still are there, albeit changed into contemporary forms.

Flush Times in Tracy City (1870–1910)

Certainly Bledsoe’s 1864 raid on Tracy City did the mining property there little good; the raid, plus the wear and tear of four years with little upkeep, left the Tennessee Coal and Railroad (TCR) holdings in a run-down condition at the end of the

war. Fortunately the firm had fallen into the hands of a skillful promoter, A. S. Colyar, who described himself as being in 1866 "sole owner, without credit, without markets." Yet within little more than a year after the end of hostilities, Colyar had coal moving again by rail out of Tracy City. First, he had satisfied the New York creditors by means of a \$220,000 stock issue. Then he had installed P. A. Marbury as general manager and gone to work himself selling the market on Sewanee coal—and, shortly, the coke made from it. E. O. Nathurst, a native of Sweden who had come in 1865 to live at Summers Place (later Summerfield), and in time would rise to a ranking company official, contracted with the TCR to supply most of the crossties used in restoring the railroad track between Tracy City and Cowan. By June of 1866 production had been resumed; 9240 tons of coal were shipped before the year was out.

All around, the South lay in ruins. Just 20 miles to the north, for example, old John Armfield was making the rounds swearing out attachment bills against gentlemen who had been cottage owners and stockholders of the Beersheba Springs Company. All personages of wealth and repute a few years before, they were now dead or ruined. This death and destruction had been wrought by the industrial North, and it is not surprising that a place which was endowed with the resources needed for industrialism would be among the first phoenixes to rise from the ashes of the Old South. Few persons, however, foresaw in 1866 that tiny Tracy City, wrecked by war, was about to become just about the most thriving place between Nashville and Chattanooga. In the end it had to relinquish to Birmingham the sobriquet "Pittsburgh of the South," yet Tracy City saw the day when it was headquarters of what would become the Tennessee Coal and Iron Division of U.S. Steel.

It seems to have been Colyar who realized the future of coke. The prewar iron furnaces of Tennessee had used charcoal for smelting, but in the North coke had begun to be used by the 1840s and definitely was the fuel of the future for the iron and steel industry. Using primitive pits on the ground, the TCR converted 5377 bushels of coke as early as 1868. Then, in 1873,

Samuel E. Jones erected in Tracy City at a cost of \$3000 the famous Fiery Gizzard coke iron furnace. Built as an experiment, the furnace collapsed soon after the coke was blown in; but 15 tons of iron were produced—the first coke iron in the history of Tennessee—demonstrating that Sewanee coal could be converted to iron-producing coke. By 1875 the production of the TCR grew to 109,100 tons of coal and 16,160 tons of coke, and by 1880 to 114,170 tons of coal and 64,440 tons of coke. By 1876 TCR property was valued at a million dollars, and it included 21 miles of railroad track, five locomotives, 150 coal cars, 400 miners' cars, and 120 coke ovens. The monthly output grossed \$30,000.

The early coke was made in those 120 ovens built in 1873 in the vicinity of the present county garage. Tending the ovens was convict labor, which, beginning in 1870, the Tennessee Coal and Railroad Company leased from the State of Tennessee at the rate of one dollar a day, plus keep, for each convict. The first stockade in which these men—most of them black—were housed was the same structure used during the war by the 20th Connecticut Volunteers. For nearly a generation the presence of convicts was very much a part of life in Tracy City. Writing from there on July 10, 1871, to her husband Leslie Kennedy—the same who first told the world of Ben Wooten's coal and 21 years later was on his only return visit to his native Ireland—Mrs. Kennedy reported, "The convicts are pegging away as usual. Two of them took it into their heads yesterday to escape, which they succeed(ed) in doing." Then there is this stanza from an old work song of local origin: "Warden went down to Nashville,/ Stepped up to the pen,/ Said to the Nashville warden,/ 'I want fifty of your best men,/ Want to take them to Tracy/ To work in the Lone Rock Mines./' Buddy, roll down the line./ Buddy, roll down the line." Old miners interviewed some years ago told of convicts being whipped for not finishing what was called their weekly "task." The rate of mortality amongst them was said to be high. Those who perished were buried on a ridge above the coke ovens, still known locally as "Nigger Hill." To the free miners and workmen

of Tracy City, the extensive use of convict labor by the company was a festering sore, which in 1892 finally would come to a head.

In the meantime, TCR production of both coal and coke was increasing annually and Tracy City was prospering. The two men who seem to have been chiefly responsible for giving positive direction to the town's development for a quarter century were the Swede, Einar Oswald Nathurst (1836–1903) and Alfred Montgomery Shook (1845–1923), a Confederate veteran who came to Tracy City from Franklin County soon after the war. Each man built himself a fine dwelling near the business district, and both were determined that Tracy City would not become another ugly mining camp. Nathurst himself managed the Building Association and was responsible for constructing many of the pleasant and attractive frame houses which went up in the last decades of the nineteenth century. In 1889 Shook took it upon himself to provide the town with a magnificent public



Convict laborers at earliest Tracy City coke ovens

school. When the Inman interests acquired the Tennessee Coal and Railroad Company in 1882 and it became the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company (TCI), Shook was made general manager and Nathurst superintendent.

The census of 1890 revealed that the population of Grundy County had more than doubled since the war to 6345. The number of Tracy Citians had surpassed 1200. A business and professional register for the year 1887 gives evidence of a thriving place. There were four physicians (three more than in 1880)—Dr. E. W. Bailey, Dr. L. P. Barber, Dr. C. F. Hutton, and Dr. R. B. Owens; one dentist—Dr. W. E. Tillett; and two druggists—H. C. Johnston and the Park & Roddy firm. There were five grocers and eight general and dry goods stores. Albert Colyar was keeping a hotel in Tracy City; M. V. Hoke was the jeweler, J. M. Daniel the photographer, and J. R. DeLuta the barber. Edward von Bergen from the Swiss Colony was selling furniture, and W. R. Hunt had a little of everything—lumber, furniture, coffins, groceries, saddles, and harness. David McClure and J. E. Smith were blacksmiths, and J. H. Northcutt kept the livery stable. At the depot—operated after its purchase of the branch line in 1887 by the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad—E. L. Hampton was the ticket agent and T. M. C. White the express agent. Finally, the town had gained its first newspaper, *The Tracy City News*, the year before, in 1886.

The general prosperity derived, of course, from the local mining and coking enterprise. In the very year of 1887, the historian Goodspeed was calling the Tracy City mine “the most extensive in the state.” Another writer also had glowing words. “Practically,” he wrote, “the mine is inexhaustible, and as pure coal, valuable alike for grates and manufacturing—making iron as well as steam.” It was averred that 25,000 acres of the company’s land was “underlaid with the Sewanee seam of coal, ranging from two to seven feet in thickness.” The company which owned these rich lands was reorganized in 1876. Colyar remained president, but ownership was in association with Thomas O’Connor, William Morrow, and W. H. Cherry. Their firm com-

pleted an iron furnace at Cowan—Colyar's dream at the time—in 1881.

Early the next year, the company sold its operations at Tracy City and Cowan to John H. Inman and associates of New York City, with the Tennessee stockholders retaining one-third ownership and local men like Nathurst and Shook being placed in charge of operations. The Inman interests soon added to their holdings the Southern States Coal, Iron and Land Company, Limited, one operation of which was a blast furnace at South Pittsburg. Then, in 1886, they acquired the Pratt Coal and Iron Company in Alabama. By this purchase the TCI became owner of the Linn Iron Company, the Alice Furnace Company, 460 coke ovens, two blast furnaces, 76,000 acres of coal lands and an additional 13,000 acres containing 7½ miles of the Red Mountain iron ore seam outcropping. At the time probably few persons realized it, but the acquisition in Alabama, where all components of iron and steel manufacture were located proximately, foreshadowed the day when TCI officials would deem their Tennessee holdings expendable. Among these was Tracy City, the original home of the company, owing to continuing conflicts with the miners of the place.

In July of 1892 the TCI had 320 convicts working continuously in its Tracy City operations, which by then included 130 additional coke ovens built at Lone Rock in 1883. Among the free miners, who were not nearly so numerous as the convicts, there was growing unrest at having to compete with them for jobs. Early Saturday morning, August 13, 1892, the bad feeling surfaced. A committee of miners went to Superintendent Nathurst and demanded more work. Nathurst replied that he believed he could assure them of more within 30 days and tried to placate the men. Words, however, were not enough for the miners that day, and at 8:30 A.M. 150 of them marched on the Lone Rock stockade in the present Grundy Lakes vicinity. Many were armed and they quickly forced open the stockade—perhaps with the help of several guards disgruntled over having recently been fired. The miners next removed company equipment to a safe distance and brought out the convicts under cover of their weap-



A. M. Shook



E. O. Nathurst

ons. Then they fired the stockade, burning it to the ground. After the miners had taken control from the guards of the convicts already at work that morning, they marched them to the depot, loaded them into boxcars, and ordered an engineer to take them to Cowan and from there send them on to Nashville. Between Monteagle and Sewanee, prisoners uncoupled one car and 13 of them made a break. At least one was killed and two wounded, but six escaped. The rest were taken back to the penitentiary on a special train sent to Cowan.

In the wake of the miners' uprising, Governor John P. Buchanan offered to send troops to Tracy City; local officials, however, said they were not needed because the convicts, the cause of the trouble, had been removed. The TCI, however, was not ready to give up using convict labor, and soon some were back. Two years later (August of 1894) it was the prisoners who mutinied. In this uprising a deputy warden, W. H. Nelson, and convict Pete Hamilton both were slain. In December of 1895 the miners struck on account of the continuing convict lease system—a strike which seems at last to have gained its end, for when the leases expired the next month (January 1, 1896), the convicts were removed for good. Soon after another milestone passed

more quietly when Tracy City's first mines, opened almost 40 years before, closed, exhausted; a little later the coke ovens nearby, those built in 1873, were shut down.

Unfortunately, the final departure of convict laborers after 25 years did not end the trouble between TCI and the miners. If anything, it was intensified. Strikes were frequent. E. C. Nathurst, who seems to have been an ameliorating influence, resigned as superintendent July 1, 1903, and died before the year was out. He was succeeded by J. H. Ferguson. The following year matters were unsettled for several months before the climax was reached. There had been no contract for some time and little work. Then, in June of 1904, TCI suddenly closed its Tracy City mines altogether and began moving some employees and mining gear—also a carload of mules—to Birmingham. In December Ferguson resigned as superintendent; TCI was ready to unload its Tennessee holdings. By April arrangements had been made to transfer all its Tracy City Division property to E. L. Hampton, NC&StL station agent. Within days the Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company (TCC) had been organized and was in possession of the former TCI holdings. This company would continue to operate extensive mines in Grundy County until the coal field disturbances early in the 1960s, and would keep its offices in Tracy City until 1969. However, the departure of Tennessee Coal and Iron to Birmingham cast a long shadow across the future of Tracy City. This change occurred when the town was enjoying its heyday and for awhile was scarcely noticed, but it made a decline inevitable.

The new company was no more successful than the old in bringing peace to the coal fields of Grundy County. Nationwide it was a time of ferment among miners, with the UMW under the leadership of John Mitchell active in organizing and carrying out successful strikes. Despite this climate, Tennessee Consolidated did not act to work out a contract but employed nonunion miners. Trouble erupted in a hail of gunfire Thursday, August 24, 1905. Nonunion miners under the supervision of Dick Henley and Jim Rust were cleaning the entrance of Reid Hill mine (near the present Fiery Gizzard Sportsman's clubhouse). Shots



E. L. Hampton, who organized the Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company in 1905

rang out from a nearby brush thicket. Henley and Rust fell mortally wounded; John McGovern also was hit but survived. Following these murders the homes both of union and nonunion men were fired into. There were stories of a secret organization of miners sworn to obedience and fraternal loyalty.

On August 27, in response to the murders and out of fear of more violence, Governor John I. Cox ordered six companies of the Third National Guard Regiment into Tracy City "to show the power of the state and to maintain law and order." He also went there himself and spoke at the Miners' Hall. In his speech Cox recognized "the right to organize," but also the right of the nonunion man to work. In tents pitched in front of Shook School the guardsmen remained through October, their bivouac called Camp Estelle after a daughter of A. M. Shook. In the meantime, two men were arrested in connection with the murders, but no

one ever was convicted of the crimes. Not until July of 1906 did the miners and TCC enter into a two-year contract.

Through the long period of unrest—from 1892 when the miners evicted the convicts until 1905 when the troops were ordered to Tracy City—and for several years after these events, the town continued to thrive. Not only had it gained a newspaper in 1886, and a fine new school in 1889, but telephone lines were strung in 1894 (and extended the following year to Altamont, Gruetli, and Beersheba Springs). Electric lights were turned on in 1904, the power provided each day from 5:00 till 11:00 P.M. by the Werner Lumber Company generating plant after quitting time. Tracy City also had a hospital, Dr. Douglas Hayes' Cumberland Mountain Sanitarium, which appropriated the Nathurst home in 1907. Newspaperman Ike Woodward even had started up a vaudeville and moving picture house. Moreover, the town's industry was diversifying. A cannery had failed in 1898, but the bottling works, started in 1904, were a success. The saw and planing mill built by the first Sam Werner was growing into one of the largest businesses of its kind in the state. Mining itself was no longer limited to one company; there were four other firms besides TCC.

By the census of 1910, Grundy County had grown to a population of 8322 and Tracy City to 3100, making it the largest town between Chattanooga and Murfreesboro. Neighboring towns all were smaller: Winchester, 1351; South Pittsburg, 2106; McMinnville, 2209; and Tullahoma, 3049. Tracy City had seven churches—Christian, Episcopal, Cumberland Presbyterian, Missionary Baptist, and three of the Methodist persuasion. Three lodges flourished—Masons, Knights of Pythias, and Red Men. The town had three doctors, a dentist, and eight attorneys. The new First National Bank had replaced the old Grundy County Bank. There were five hostleries, including the well-known Tidman House. The New York Stores headed the numerous mercantile establishments. Rail connections were excellent. For example, residents of Tracy City (or Coalmont or Monteagle) could board the early morning passenger train to Cowan, change there for Nashville (or Chattanooga), spend the

day in the capital on a business or pleasure outing, and be home by 8:30 in the evening.

In October of 1909 another mark of modern improvement appeared in town. The first concrete sidewalks were laid—in front of the post office and the Annex on the corner, continuing down the street in front of the New York Store, City Drug Store, and E. C. Norvell's firm in the Masonic building. A few months later there was a natural wonder. In March the people of Tracy City began to be able to observe Halley's comet. For weeks it dominated the night sky and then began to fade from view. In June it disappeared. The comet could be taken as symbol of Tracy City's own times of highest prosperity, and of its impending decline.

What Manner of People

The opening of the new century provides an apt place to interrupt the chronology for a look at local character. For this purpose it is fortunate that the first view of southern mountain character given to the literary world grew out of observations of the native folk of Grundy County, Tennessee. In 1884 Mary Noailles Murfree (under the pen name Charles Egbert Craddock) published a collection of mountain dialect stories entitled *In the Tennessee Mountains*. She had found her material during summers before and after the Civil War spent in Beersheba Springs where her father was a cottager. Miss Murfree thus could provide a view not only of mountain character in itself, but also of the mountaineer in his relations with the summer people of the Cumberland Plateau. The pages of this history often are dominated by representatives of that class of persons who have summered on the mountain, or by others not natives of the place—men like John Armfield, A. S. Colyar, John Moffat, E. O. Nathurst, Leonidas Polk, Eugen Plumacher, and A. M. Shook. The reader must not forget, however, that such persons played out their parts in the local drama in the midst of Leonard Tate's "mountain people." And to understand the history of such

a county as Grundy, one must become acquainted with the essential traits of these people.

Two other acute observers besides Miss Murfree have left circumstantial accounts of mountain folk. They are Horace Kephart, in his pre-World War I account, *Our Southern Highlanders*, and Emma Bell Miles, in *The Spirit of the Mountains*, a book published in 1905 and based on her experience among the natives of Walden Ridge—the range which runs parallel to Cumberland Mountain, lying east of the Sequatchie Valley. Mrs. Miles' insights are especially helpful in promoting an understanding of such mountaineers as those of Grundy County. She wrote of them when they still were little spoiled by outsiders' influences, which tended, she believed, to turn them into "poor imitation city people," servile and avaricious.

Let us begin with a simple observable fact about the old native of the plateau: he built his cabin close as he could to a fine spring. To him, though, "fine spring" did not signify chalybeate water of the kind which flowed from Beersheba's Spring, no matter what outlanders might claim for its medicinal benefits. He wanted instead the purest and coldest freestone. And better not try to fool him, for the true mountaineer was as much a connoisseur of water as a Frenchman is of wine. The dwelling which he favored near his spring, Mrs. Miles described as "a double log house . . . two pens, with an entry between"—the type called a "dog-run" or "shotgun." It was, however, the mountain woman, not the man, who lived in the house. The men came indoors to eat and sleep, but their essential life was outdoors where they felt footloose and delighted in such delicious sounds as the note of the wood thrush.

Encompassed by the great forests of oak, which provided abundant mast, the mountaineer always ran hogs. Not surprisingly, therefore, salt pork was the staple of his diet and the drippings both the syrup and oil of his "old woman's" cookery. Sometimes he would dip biscuit into the clear grease; more often, flour and milk would be added to make him "white gravy."

Mountain folk have been notorious for their "independence," often expressed in "bull-headed contrariness." This habit



A characteristic Grundy County family of the old times, that of "Uncle" Bill Parks, gathered in front of their double log dwelling

of mind and action developed when home places were so far apart that each individual had, according to Mrs. Miles, "solitude for the unhampered growth of his personality, wing-room for his eagle heart." One important effect, observable throughout the history of Grundy County, is that mountain people have little sense of civic responsibility. To borrow again the characterization of Mrs. Miles, "They are knit together, man to man, as friends, but not as a body of men." In consequence, they unite only under the impetus of an emergency; when that passes, the organization formed to meet it as often as not dissolves and the individual habit is resumed. This is what Leonard Tate perceived as "morale friable as our sandstone." Little wonder, then, that so many of the far-reaching enterprises in the county's history—those re-

quiring long-range vision and long-lasting cohesiveness—have been the doing of outsiders.

Because the habit of acting independently was so ingrained and because all things—lawmen included—were “right smart off,” the mountaineer has little use for the law but seldom has he a criminal’s mentality. Society being ordered as it is, he is more likely than the average American to find himself before a judge, more likely to “pull time.” The origin, dating back to the Whisky Rebellion, of his lack of regard for the law is the utter foolishness and unfairness—to the mountaineer’s way of seeing it—of the law’s forbidding him to convert his corn into “the clear, fiery product of the still.” Where is the sense in that? Nevertheless, he usually has played the game according to the rules, accepting the penalties of the law rather than ambush a revenueur. History records only one murder of an agent in Grundy County. That was way back in 1883 when Jim Davis, an especially aggressive revenue man, was enticed into a trap and riddled with bullets in Collins River Valley.

Such an occurrence is unusual, for seldom has a Grundy Countian harmed an outsider, no matter how abrasive his manner or objectionable his deeds. It is his (or her) kith and kin who customarily sustain the blast of the mountaineer’s momentary fury. The number of homicides always has been great; in a recent year when Atlanta was being billed as “the murder capital of the U.S.,” the rate in Tracy City was 15 times greater. Armed robbery, however, has been rare and rape seldom entered on an indictment. The mountaineer’s troubles with the law stem mainly from assault and homicide, from operating illegal distilleries, and, recently, from receiving stolen property—usually in the form of stripped automobile parts. To his mind these are all troubles that a body simply may have to get into taking care of his own business and keeping food on his table; they do not make him a criminal.

Yet in his own proud way the mountaineer usually comes soon or late to feel the need to make peace with his Maker—to “get right with the Lord.” This is too personal a matter, though, to transact in the midst of strangers; it is done in the presence

of one's own people. A statistic tells the story. In Grundy County there is one church for about each 130 persons—82 congregations in a population of 10,631 (1970 census). Implicit in the statistic is this: though most mountain people come to believe in and to share a common faith, they choose to preach and sing and testify to their belief within their own clan. And whether the congregation calls itself Baptist or Congregational Methodist or some branch of Pentecostal, the doctrine and its expression in worship are very much the same. First, all believe every word in the Bible to be true, but they feel free to interpret this truth according to their own lights. Second, there is a kind of resignation, even fatalism, in their outlook, their aim in this life being to submit to events in the spirit of "Thy will be done." Beyond this life they look forward to "a home in heaven" where, of greatest importance, the ties broken by the deaths of loved ones are restored and all earthly burdens are laid by. Such beliefs are reinforced by mountain preachers who are vigorous and loud—men who speak readily on their feet, not through preparation, but "led of the Spirit." The Grundy County poet Myrtle Brown Creighton has given a stanza to such preachers in her poem "Time for Prayer-Meeting": "For all that he knows / Comes straight from the heart, / Not read from a paper, / Scored, written, or marked." Beliefs are also reinforced in song. Mountaineers are good singers, they love to sing, and their songs are repetitive of the old truths of the heart. As Mrs. Miles observed of their worship, "They rock to and fro, softly crooning and moaning through song and prayer, until the impulse comes upon them to leap in the air and scream and shout until exhausted."

In regard to the character of the natives of the Cumberland Plateau, it is as Leonard Tate perceived. At first glance they appear "a boorish set," but plumb the old, unspoiled mountaineer to his depths and one strikes "granite."

The Local Culture

Having broken in upon the narrative of events to contemplate the local character very briefly, we may as well, before re-

suming, proceed to survey those institutions and individuals that have done the indispensable work in Grundy County of transmitting culture. This has been the task of churches, schools, the weekly press, and even several eminent authors. Theirs is an endeavor which ought to be recalled.

Churches

There have been so many congregations of Christian worshipers in Grundy County—about 80 at the present time—as to render impossible an exhaustive history of local church life in a survey like this one. The best which can be done is to note the highlights and to point out what seems representative.

Already noted is the fact that the church which may have been the first organized in the territory which became Grundy County continues to this day. This is the Philadelphia Baptist Church in Collins River Valley, whose minutes show that it has observed the fourth Sunday in May as a day for annual worship and fellowship from 1809 to the present.

From that beginning Grundy County has provided the setting for a remarkably diverse religious practice, reflecting almost the full spectrum of the Protestant heritage. Along with the to-be-expected Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Campbellites, and Pentecostals, Grundy County somewhat unexpectedly also has its Seventh-day Adventist, Mormon, and Mennonite communities.

Notable by its absence, however, is a contemporary church of the Roman Catholic communion. Several Catholic families reside in the county, most of them in Pelham Valley, but they must travel to nearby Alto in Franklin County, or on to Winchester, to attend services. It has not always been so. A Roman Catholic Church once stood in Tracy City near the location of the present Burmah L-P Gas Company office. In 1893 the priest serving this church was a Father Griffith, who celebrated the Mass every third Sunday.

The Presbyterian denomination also has declined through the years. Its only congregation in the county today is a small Cumberland Presbyterian church at Monteagle. However, there

once was an influential Cumberland Presbyterian place of worship in Tracy City, standing at about the present site of the primary health care unit. This church was one of the many structures which the alleged arsonist Clyde C. Newsom was accused of igniting over a period of months in 1915–16. It was not consumed, but some years later the congregation disbanded and the building then used for a community house and the town library before being taken down in 1958.

If Roman Catholics and Presbyterians have declined in Grundy County, other denominations have flourished, or at least held their own. Owing to the nearness of the Episcopal education center at Sewanee, this communion has achieved an unusual influence in so rural a county as Grundy. Christ Church in Tracy City goes back farthest, having observed its centennial in 1968. One of the most universally revered pastors in the history of the county was the vicar of this Episcopal mission from 1928 to 1941. He was the Reverend Alfonso Constantine Adamz, who especially left his mark on the youth of the locale. A naturalist and an outdoorsman, Father Adamz developed an extremely popular Boy Scout program, one of the projects of which was a widely famous museum featuring stuffed zoological specimens. The Boy Scout Museum first was located in the old NC&StL roundhouse, then upstairs in the Colyar House courtroom after the branch circuit court was abolished. The epitaph on the headstone marking Father Adamz' grave in City Cemetery epitomizes his great usefulness to the community. It reads: "Beloved priest, friend of youth."

St. Alban's Chapel, the Episcopal place of worship established at Coalmont in 1904, has been removed. There are, however, two additional Episcopal missions in Grundy County—the Church of the Holy Comforter at Monteagle and St. Bernard's at Gruetli.

Being hierarchic in polity, the Protestant Episcopal Church is not representative of Grundy County, where congregation-alism is the rule. The denomination which mountain folk once called "the Big Methodists" (originally the Methodist Episcopal Church) is about the only other one which is not congregational. The United Methodists of today have sizable and active churches

at Monteagle (Morton Memorial), Tracy City, Coalmont, and Hubbard's Cove (Wesley's Chapel); smaller churches exist at Providence, Pelham, and Valley Home in Pelham Valley, Palmer, and Beersheba Springs (Grace Chapel). The fine old Morton Memorial Church at Tarlton seldom is used for services nowadays and recently suffered at the hands of vandals.

To be an ordained clergyman of the Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic communions, a man must have been college educated or seminary trained, and often both. This fact goes far toward explaining why the four denominations which account for almost 60 per cent of the membership of Christian churches in the United States comprise only about one-sixth of the congregations in Grundy County, Tennessee. The late Brother Ed Nunley of Flat Branch, who preached locally for about 50 of his nearly 100 years, once explained in an interview the impetus which led many a mountain man who believed God had called him to the ministry to attach himself to a local congregational church that did not require formal training for ordination. He said, "We belonged to what was called 'the Big Methodists.' I wanted to be ordained, but they said I had to have two years of schooling. I didn't have the money to take the training, so I went to the Congregational Methodists." This experience of about the year 1910 has been repeated many times; to this day, though a local aspirant to the ministry seldom goes off for training, the woods are full of preachers.

Having gotten a head start on the other denominations way back in 1809, the Baptists through the years have maintained their lead in the number of congregations in Grundy County. Today there are about 20 Baptist churches. Many of these are small congregations and missions. Few are attached to the more prominent associations like the Southern Baptist Convention. Two of the larger churches are the Tracy City First Baptist and the Altamont Baptist.

Most communities in Grundy County have a Church of Christ, there being about 10 in all. The oldest of these is the Northcutt's Cove Church of Christ, which was established in 1873 and is reputed to have been among the first in the region.

An influential Church of Christ minister of the early years of the twentieth century was J. D. Northcutt, also a noted educator in Tracy City. Converted under his preaching in about 1910 was Bailey (Preacher) Brooks (1886–1980), in his own last years the dean of county ministers. Like most native preachers of the place, Mr. Brooks earned his livelihood outside the ministry—as a blacksmith at Tracy City and then as an employee of Tennessee Consolidated at Palmer. Similarly, Brother Ed Nunley was a miner at Coalmont.

Grundy County is remarkable for the number and influence of its Congregational Methodist churches. A denomination not widely known, it was founded in Monroe County, Georgia, in May of 1852, by ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, dissatisfied with what they considered to be the excessive authority of the circuit-riders. Today there are more than 200 Congregational Methodist churches scattered over 11 southern states. Of these, about a dozen are to be found either in Grundy County itself or nearby in adjacent mountain counties. An early church had become well established in Tracy City by 1893, and its minister was the Reverend V. A. Faigaux. Among the convincing local preachers early in this century, Ed Nunley listed James Hart, Farrell Tate, and Elihu Fults. Brother Carl Haynes of Tracy City, Brother Nunley's contemporary, was a beloved Congregational Methodist pastor during a ministry which extended from 1913 to 1972. Perhaps the most active churches of this denomination today are those at Myers Hill and Laager.

Though standing idle today, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Northcutt's Cove is the oldest building used for Mormon worship in Tennessee. It was erected in 1909. Mormon missionaries from Utah, traveling according to their custom in pairs, began hiking through Grundy County in about 1892. The late Lewis F. Fults recalled that Rushton and West were the first two, followed by Archibald and Burrell. They would take the branch train to Tracy City, then walk north the extent of Grundy, Warren, and DeKalb counties to Silver Point, a distance of about 60 miles. Descending from Altamont into Northcutt's Cove, they began stopping—at first just for a glass

of water—at the home of Mr. Fults' sister, and giving her a tract in exchange. In about 1905 Albert Fults became the first baptized convert in the county. The Latter-day Saints built their second church in 1943 at Altamont, across from the courthouse. Currently (1981), they are constructing a new building on State Highway 108 west of Altamont. Its projected cost is greater than that of any place of worship previously raised in Grundy County.

The first Seventh-day Adventists came to Cumberland Mountain in October of 1934, locating just south of Altamont at a place which soon would be known as Cumberland Heights. In the beginning there were just three of them, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Edmister and their son Art. Upon arriving from Portland, Tennessee, they lived in tents on the old Griswold place. In partnership with Mrs. Edmister's sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. B. N. Mulford, the Edmisters bought 700 acres. Mrs. Edmister was a nurse, and their aim was to launch a medical practice in a county which had no hospital. Eventually, the partnership between the Edmisters and Mulfords was dissolved, and the latter opened a nursing home in Monteagle—the Wren's Nest. In Cumberland Heights, meantime, the Edmisters had built a small clinic, and they persuaded Dr. Lester F. Littell of Lebanon to begin a practice there in 1940. Some years later, the Cumberland Heights Clinic was sold to his brother, Dr. Charles A. Littell, who in 1956 had opened offices in Tracy City. The clinic now has evolved into a hospital, the only one in Grundy County to this day.

In the years since the Edmisters arrived in Grundy County, many more Seventh-day Adventist families have followed them, some to build homes at Cumberland Heights, others nearby on the Colony Road. Membership in the SDA church which was established at Cumberland Heights in 1941 has increased to about 135 persons. Adventists also have erected a school of eight grades on the church grounds; it first opened in 1964. In addition to the church at Cumberland Heights, there are flourishing congregations at Monteagle and Beersheba Springs.

Mennonites have also moved to Grundy County in recent decades. Their farming community is located in the Skymont

locale about five miles west of Altamont. The Mennonites have established an eight-grade school for their children and also use the school building for worship. Their strawberries and melons are in great demand in season.

Schools

Of the many schools which have served the youth of Grundy County, the earliest known is Altamont Academy, which must have been founded at about the same time the county seat itself was being laid out in the mid-1840s. The school which kept its doors open longest, James K. Shook School, was in session "on the hill" in Tracy City from 1890 to 1976. Today, following a 25-year period of consolidation, Grundy County operates one high school and six elementary schools. Thus the earliest period of local education was one of private schooling, followed by transition years of mixed private benefaction and public funding, and more recently, by the two eras of public schooling, the first being marked by decentralization and the second by consolidation.

Altamont Academy is believed to have been located on the Northcutt's Cove road, adjacent to the present Altamont Cemetery. Since it was attended by Harris Bradford Northcutt, who was born the sixth of Adrian Northcutt's 11 sons in 1829, the school surely had to have been going as early as the mid-1840s. In later life Harris operated the Northcutt store in Altamont, a building still standing, and was also postmaster for two tenures totaling 25 years. Other eminent nineteenth century Grundy Countians known to have attended Altamont Academy include William Anderson Griswold (b. 1832), a miller; Henry Overturf (b. 1835), a sheriff and first postmaster of Tatesville; Andrew J. Lockhart (b. 1837), county trustee; Lawson Hill Northcutt (b. 1840), another of Adrian's sons, Confederate veteran, and state legislator; and John Scruggs (b. 1844), county court clerk.

Harris Gilliam Thompson, a Tracy City mine contractor, was the latest born of the men known to have attended Altamont Academy. Since the year of his birth was 1858, it may be surmised that the school still was open in the 1870s and must have flourished for at least a full generation. One benefactor of Al-

tamont Academy, according to local tradition, was John Armfield, who may have helped support the school in the 1850s and 1860s.

The county's second school probably had opened in Tracy City before the Civil War and may have been named The Early School. In existing records, however, this school is referred to only when it had become inadequate to meet the needs of the flourishing community of 1200 which had grown up by the late 1880s. By the summer of 1888, Tracy Citians had begun "to agitate the question of a new school building, adequate and convenient." Residents had not the money to provide a new school, though, until A. M. Shook, general manager of Tennessee Coal and Iron, came forward. According to the account written by Miss Corrinne Mankin for the first Shook School annual (published in 1925), this influential gentleman "expressed the wish to benefit, first, every employee of his company, and next, every citizen of Tracy City, by constructing for them a modern building at his own expense." The provisos of his benefaction were that the people must promise to send their children to school regularly and to supplement public funds with their own money to assure a school term of a full nine months. The public agreed; thereafter the single men of Tracy City paid out of their wages 50 cents and the married men a dollar a month, until this means of support was abandoned when Tracy City incorporated in 1915.

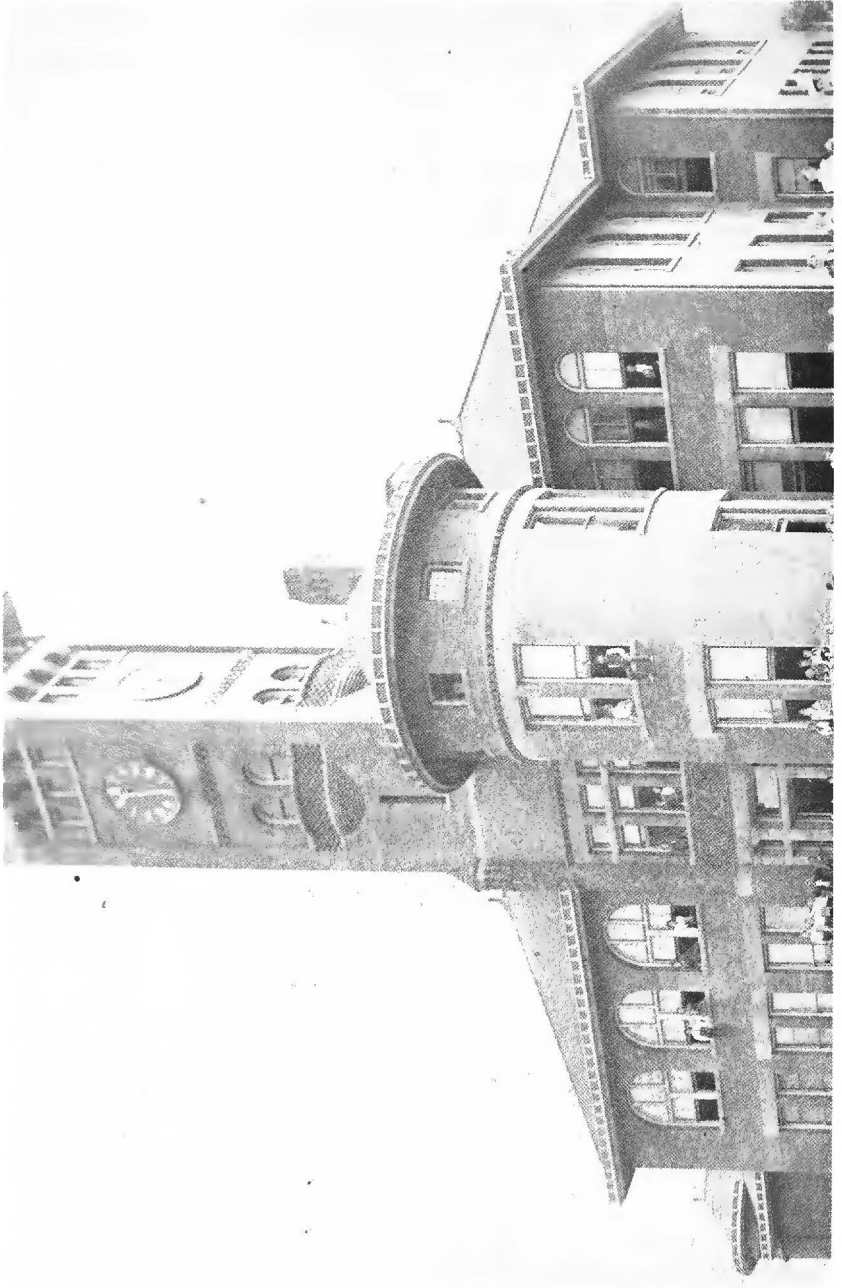
The building was the most stately landmark that any locale in Grundy County ever boasted. Not only did it supply the practical need of a sufficiency of classrooms for the community, but it did so in grand style. Its foundations were deep, and it was built of red brick handmade nearby. The edifice displayed such strokes of elegance as fine arched windows, a turret, and a magnificent clock tower, for which Colonel Shook himself provided the clock. The auditorium seated 500 persons, all of whom were afforded ease of vision, owing to the graduation of seats from front to back and the fan type of design similar to the contemporary "theater in the round."

Amazingly, considering its many extraordinary features, the

new Tracy City school was built for the sum of \$39,700. It was named for Colonel Shook's father, James Keith Shook, who had been a teacher in Franklin County. Shook School first opened for the fall term of 1890, with the Reverend E. J. McCroskey as principal. Another minister, the Reverend W. G. Dillon, succeeded to the principalship in 1894. Professor Dillon, affectionately called "Pinky" by his pupils when he was out of earshot, served as principal from 1894 to 1904. He stepped aside for the next several years to be president of the new First National Bank. Then he resumed the post from 1911 until his death in 1917. In the interim J. D. Northcutt had been principal.

During these tenures Shook graduated its first eighth grade class in 1892, its first tenth grade class in 1895, and its first eleventh grade class in 1915. By the 1919–20 term Shook boasted a 12-year curriculum; in the spring of 1920, it gave diplomas to its first full-fledged high school graduates, Foster Eller and Rachel Stone. In 1921 Grundy County took over the entire expense of operating Shook School. The last county high school class to graduate at Shook was that of 1928, which comprised 23 members. The school then reverted to an eight-grade elementary curriculum, which continued from 1928 almost through the 1975–76 term. Then, in the early morning hours of Saturday, May 22, 1976, the grand old school on the hill was razed by a fire which was the work of arsonists. Colonel Shook's clock marked time at 4:25 when it stopped forever.

Grundy County High School was established in 1928 at its present location (across State Highway 56 from the Tracy City Cemetery). The original structure, built at a cost of \$45,000, lasted only until 1935 when it was destroyed by one of those fires which Clyde C. Newsom is alleged to have set. The school then was rebuilt and gained in subsequent years its present gymnasium (1950) and vocational facilities, built in the 1970s and partially funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission. The first principal of G. C. H. S. was Allen McCormick, who was succeeded in 1936 by E. J. Cunningham, later county superintendent of education. The principal of longest tenure was John A. Anderson, who came as coach and teacher in 1929 and in 1940



James K. Shook School, circa 1895

was elected principal, a position he held through the 1965–66 term. The football field was named in his honor in 1971. By the 1970s the enrollment of the high school exceeded 700.

In addition to its high school, Grundy County continued to operate about 40 elementary education schools in the generation which followed its taking over the secondary program. Most of these were community one-room schools. James K. Shook in those days boasted a faculty of about 13 teachers, and Palmer had 10. Other schools usually requiring more than one teacher were Monteagle, Hobbs Hill, Myers Hill, Flat Branch, Sweeton Hill, Coalmont, Laager, Mt. Vernon, Collins, Altamont, Beer-sheba Springs, Tarlton, and Mt. Olive. The following, however, were operated for many years with just one teacher: in Elk River Valley there existed Valley Home, Elk Head, Camp Ground, Payne's Cove, Providence, Pelham, and Pelham Colored (the only school in the county for Negroes, the enrollment of which declined to about 15 pupils before it was closed in the early 1950s when the last black families moved from the county); in the Tracy City vicinity schools in operation were Summerfield, Sanders Crossing, and Clouse Hill; in the vicinity of the Highway 56—108 junction there were Freemont, Gruetli, Victòria, Barker, and Tatesville; at the north end of the county, Panhandle, Utah, Northcutt Cove, Pond Springs, Savage, and Gap were in use; and toward Hubbard's Cove there were Hixson, Marvin Chapel, Chestnut, and Wesley Chapel schools.

In the fall of 1946 Grundy County began to transport pupils by bus, and during the past generation most of the older public schools have been abandoned through consolidation. Today there are but six elementary schools. The oldest of these are at Palmer and Coalmont, the latter rebuilt in 1949 following a fire. Pelham School, which gained a new building in 1970, now is the only school in the Elk River Valley, the final consolidation there having been made with Valley Home. Swiss Memorial, a consolidation of Mt. Vernon, Laager, and Collins, was finished in 1972. Both Pelham and Swiss Memorial were built during the tenure of Raymond Hargis as superintendent of education. New schools were ready at Altamont and Tracy City for the 1980–81

term, the former consolidating Altamont and Beersheba Springs and the latter James K. Shook and Plainview. These two schools were constructed while Glenn E. Bonner was superintendent. Facilities at the six county elementary schools include classrooms, cafeterias, and gymnasiums. The elementary school today in Monteagle is on a site south of the L&N tracks and hence is in Marion County, which operates it.

Newspapers

A weekly press headquartered in Tracy City has published the news of Grundy County regularly for almost a century. Though there are reports that Charlie Foster, the painter for whom Foster Falls is named, started a newspaper called the *Mountain Eagle* in 1875, the county's first known paper was the *Tracy City News*, launched the first week in September of 1886, with John A. Green as editor. Augustus H. Woodlee, a native of Collins River Valley who became a state senator, was the most influential publisher of this paper, a post he held from 1893 to 1901.

Grundy Publishing Company restyled its *Tracy City News* as *Mrs. Grundy* in April of 1903. I. B. (Ike) Woodward, the county's most important early newspaperman, was editor of *Mrs. Grundy* from 1910 to 1915. Previously, he occasionally had gotten out *The Advertiser*, replete with interest for the historian, as is his famous booklet, "Tracy City from 1893 to 1910." John P. Wright, a printer who married Woodward's widow after he died of tuberculosis in 1915, edited *Mrs. Grundy* from 1915 until it was sold and the name changed in 1929.

For periods *Mrs. Grundy* had local competition—the *Mountain Herald* (1910–1914) and the *Grundy County Times* (1914–1916). Papers also ran for a while at Altamont—*The Telephone*, launched April 29, 1903, and the *Altamont Comet*, in April of 1908. At the end of the nineteenth century, the *Mont Eagle Trade Journal* seems to have been issued monthly by E. W. Halcombe. Other early Tracy City editors were W. C. Abernathy, O. R. Blalock, C. C. Brooks, J. B. (Beecher) Brown, W. G. (Graham) Cline, Jeff D. Fults (like Abernathy, an influential local attorney and state leg-

islator later in life), M. H. McDowell, Clyde C. Newsom, John M. Simpson, Jr. (noted for his occasional verse), and W. O. Thomas. Newsom was the most “fiery” of editors in that he allegedly burned the printing plants of both *Mrs. Grundy* and the *Grundy County Times* in 1915–16 after editing the papers in turn and becoming disgruntled.

Julie M. Ritzius of Beersheba Springs, one of the buyers of *Mrs. Grundy*, became the county’s first woman editor in 1929 and renamed her paper the *Cumberland Outlook*. By 1933, after Miss Ritzius married and moved to Nashville, this paper—which survived till about 1937—had competition. W. P. Murray, a veteran printer from Petersburg, Tennessee, had launched the *Grundy County Herald*. Murray retired in 1946, selling the Herald Publishing Company jointly to his son George and Herman E. Baggenstoss, one of the six brothers who owned the local Dutch-Maid Bakery. At this time, 60 years after the founding of the *Tracy City News*, the county weekly still was set by hand, sheet-fed into a four-page press by hand, and folded by hand. The press run totaled about 600 copies.

After about a year George Murray and Herman Baggenstoss dissolved their partnership, the former launching the short-lived *Cumberland Sun* and the latter continuing the *Herald*. During his 20-year tenure, Baggenstoss established a modern hot metal printing plant, obtaining a Linotype, a No. 1 Miehle press (still hand-fed but printing eight pages), and an automatic folding machine. After buying out the *North Grundy Star* (founded in 1954 by Scott M. Crutchfield in Altamont) from Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Burdick of Cumberland Heights, Baggenstoss achieved a combined circulation of about 2000.

James L. Nicholson, a Kentucky native who had been teaching in Sewanee, bought the Herald Publishing Company in 1966 and remained associated with the firm until 1977. The final hot metal issue of the *Herald* came off the No. 1 Miehle on June 17, 1971, after which a change was made to the offset printing technology. Typesetting by means of photocomposition equipment and page pasteup since have been done in Tracy City, but the paper has been printed at central plants elsewhere. Circulation

soon grew to 3500. On September 2, 1976, to commemorate the 90th anniversary of newspaper publishing in Grundy County, the *Herald* issued "Grundy County, 1844–1976," a 64-page tabloid which at the time was the largest single issue ever published locally. Nicholson, in association with Tracy Citians William Henry Nunley and William Ray Turner, edited this historical publication. A sequel, "Grundy County, 1946–60," followed early in 1977. Ten years before, Turner had enlarged local historical archives by sending his extensive collection of Grundy County papers (about 1300) to the Tennessee State Library and Archives for microfilming.

Lakeway Publishers, a newspaper chain with headquarters in Morristown, acquired the *Grundy County Herald* in May of 1977. It is interesting that in 1981 Mrs. Myrtle Brown Creighton of Altamont continued as a correspondent for this paper. Having first begun to contribute to local papers as a Shook School pupil in 1910, she now has been at it more than 70 years.

Authors

A distinguished set of authors has been associated with Grundy County, either as a subject to write about or as a place to write in. The first of these, Mary Noailles Murfree, already has been mentioned. She found her characters for the famous *In the Tennessee Mountains* (first published in 1884) while summing in Grundy County. The importance of Grundy County mountaineers to her work is evident from this critical assessment: "Her representation of the local dialect is her chief single achievement . . . ; hers is, in fact, the best of all representations of the Southern Appalachian dialect."

Andrew Nelson Lytle, like Miss Murfree a native of Murfreesboro, has spent many years of his distinguished life in Monteagle and has written large parts of three important books there at his cottage on the Assembly Grounds. These are his biography, *Bedford Forrest and His Critter Company* (1931), his second novel *At the Moon's End* (1941), and his autobiography *A Wake for the Living* (1975). In addition, the late Allen Tate and novelist

Madison Jones are reported to have done some of their writing while staying at rented cottages at the Assembly.

Miss May Justus is another author who has made her home in Grundy County. A native of Cocke County, she moved to Summerfield in 1925 and during a 50-year period has published more than 60 children's books. Most of these derive from her own early experience in Appalachia, and many feature her favorite character, Gabby Gaffer.

Grundy County's own fine native author is poet Leonard L. Tate of Beersheba Springs. His mother, the late Mrs. Martha Belle Smith Tate, was the town's first librarian. He graduated from Grundy County High School in 1932 and served in the North African Theater during World War II. His poems, many of which are collected in his *Shadows in the Wind*, have been well received by discriminating critics. They have been published over the decades in more than 50 magazines. The late County Judge J. L. Rollings, a man of brilliant intelligence himself, once said of Mr. Tate, "In the years to come, Grundy County will be remembered largely for one reason: that Leonard Tate lived there and wrote his poetry."

Twentieth Century Mining Towns (1904–1917)

Coalmont

By the end of the nineteenth century, the once thick veins of Sewanee coal in the earliest mines of the Tracy City vicinity were playing out. In 1896 Tennessee Coal and Iron officials indicated that they were about to close such exhausted mines as old Wooten No. 1. Yet this announcement certainly did not signal total depletion of the vast coal reserves of the mountain, only that operations must shift to untapped veins and that new shafts must be put down. With the opening of these mines in the first years of the twentieth century, railroad tracks fanned out from Tracy City—to Clouse Hill, to Nunley Ridge and Flat Branch, to Pryor Ridge.

The Sewanee Coal, Coke, & Land Company invested in the

mines at Clouse Hill north of Tracy City. About 1903 this firm began taking steps to develop its property several miles farther north at a locale known as Coal Dale. Work was begun on the railroad to this place, which by June had had its name changed to Coalmont. Labor contractors recruited black workmen to lay the tracks to Coalmont and brought them to the mountain in groups as large as 80. These laborers, along with their "camp followers," lived in camps set up along the route. From time to time there was trouble. The first fatal altercation took place in January of 1904, when one John Duncan shot and killed Kate Thomas and was himself wounded by John "Black Diamond" Key. Despite such occurrences, the laying of the rails was completed by March of 1904. In the meantime, a post office had been established at Coalmont on August 14, 1903.

The new coal town flourished. Its correspondent for *Mrs. Grundy*, the Tracy City newspaper, boasted that Coalmont had "the best class of miners to be found at any coal camp in the state." The only problem was that the Sewanee Coal, Coke, & Land Company could not find enough such men. "Fifty to 100 more practical miners to dig coal would be welcomed," the correspondent affirmed, pointing out also that "the new (coke) ovens are not all burning because of a scarcity of slack occasioned by a lack of miners."

The Episcopalians established the first church at Coalmont, consecrating St. Alban's Chapel in September of 1904 (it was maintained till September 1951). By the fall of 1906, Professor Will Campbell was holding school for about 50 pupils, although it was March of 1908 before a building erected for a school, as such, was ready for use. That same month the Tracy City newspaperman Ike Woodward had a moving picture show going, and for added entertainment a skating rink had opened. The Red Man, a popular lodge of the period, also organized a Coalmont chapter.

In September of 1908 the Sewanee Fuel & Iron Company bought out the holdings of Sewanee Coal, Coke, & Land. The buyers continued to produce coal from the Coalmont mines and

to convert to coke in its ovens for about the next 30 years. These productive facilities did not change hands again until November of 1939, when they were acquired by the Coalmont Coal and Coke Company, of which John E. Patton was president. This firm operated through most of World War II, up into 1944. The property since has changed hands several times, but the ovens (reopened briefly in 1951) and the mines have been shut down for a generation now.

Whereas the coal mines of Tracy City carried the names of locales and individuals, or were given such colorful designations as Rattlesnake, Possum Tail, and Wildcat, those at Coalmont were named systematically, making use of the letters of the alphabet. They were A Mine, B Mine, C Mine, and so on up to G Mine. B Mine, located under Sweeton Hill, was the most extensively worked. Tracks laid from A Mine enabled coal to be carried by car to the washer, which was at the tipples near the coke ovens. These abandoned facilities are to be found along the old tracks, just west of where they cross present Highway 56.

About 20 to 25 black men provided much of the labor at the coke ovens. They and their families lived nearby in "the Negro Quarters," which numbered about a dozen dwellings in addition to a structure which did double duty as church and school. Blacks abandoned Coalmont in the 1920s, according to accounts of older residents. Following a pushing incident between blacks and whites at the company commissary, a black man was killed on the hill near St. Alban's Chapel. Soon the Quarters stood empty.

Today Coalmont's oldest continuing institution is the Coalmont Savings Bank. It was established April 12, 1921, with assets totaling a mere \$25,543. However, its first home was a fine brick building with a red tile roof which served for years as the commercial hub of Coalmont. The bank shared the first floor with the post office, convenient for Arthur R. Curtis, who served tenures both as cashier of the bank and postmaster. On the second floor were the offices of the Sewanee Fuel & Iron Company. Mr. Curtis is given much of the credit for enabling the bank to



An early Coalmont scene at the Sewanee Fuel and Iron Company Store. Arthur R. Curtis, for years Coalmont postmaster and bank cashier, may be seen at an upstairs window.

weather the Depression, the deepest trough of which was experienced locally in the years 1930–1935. The Coalmont Savings Bank has enjoyed a steady growth since World War II and today has a spacious new building in Coalmont and branches at Tracy City, Altamont, and Palmer. Lon S. Varnell, former owner of the Chevrolet dealership in Tracy City and now an entertainment promoter in Nashville, became chairman of the bank's board of directors in 1972. John E. Curtis (son of Arthur R.) has served a long tenure as president.

Other landmarks of the years when Coalmont flourished are gone. Both the depot and St. Alban's Chapel were dismantled early in the 1950s. The mishaps of time also have claimed the commissary and the well-known Wigwam Hotel.

Palmer

Several months before President Wilson took the United States into World War I, officials of Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company reached an opportune decision. They did not know that demand for coal was about to reach record levels owing to a war economy, but they did know that depletion of their reserves around Tracy City dictated that they begin to develop the large fields that TCC owned to the northeast. These were on the mountain in the eastern extreme of Grundy County, which in 1917 was a sparsely settled area accessible to the more populous southern part of the county only by difficult mountain roads. To get coal out, it would be necessary to extend the branch railroad eastward about 13 miles from Coalmont, its terminus since 1904.

Accordingly, in January of 1917, the president of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad announced plans for what was called "the first really new railroad construction in Tennessee in years." Once again black laborers were brought to the mountain to lay track, and as the work progressed, they occupied at least four camps along the route. In the same months that the rails were being extended, TCC was opening its new mines in the Hill Creek vicinity not far from the old east Grundy community of Tatesville. The post office at Tatesville dated back to 1880 when Henry Overturf, a Confederate veteran of the 35th Tennessee Infantry, was appointed postmaster.

The railroad to Palmer was completed and the mines were ready to operate in time to begin moving out coal in the war year 1918. This large operation would continue to produce coal until the early 1960s when a dispute between the United Mine Workers and Tennessee Consolidated, attended by bloodshed and destruction of property, led to a permanent shutdown. At their peak the Palmer mines employed over 700 men and produced hundreds of carloads of coal each week, far in excess of the 800 tons per day average of the Tracy City mines in the 1858–1917 period. For many years Everett Roberts superintended TCC's Palmer operation.

The town of Palmer (locally pronounced "PAR-mer") grew

up around Tennessee Consolidated's new operation. Early residents recall that the place took its name from a family who lived in a large house where the company store later was built. The town was mapped by a civil engineer from New York named Foust. He proceeded section by section, giving each locale a colorful name which probably derived from some personal experience or observation in that portion of his survey. Mr. Foust's names included Duck Town, Chigger Town, and Burnt Orchard.

Dwellings for miners and their families were being built in 1917, and newcomers from far and wide soon were moving in. It did not take long for the population of Palmer to exceed 1000 and for it thus to become the second most populous place in the county's history. Moreover, its daytime population was augmented each morning by the arrival on the early train of miners and other company employees who had boarded at Tracy City and other points along the route, like Sanders Crossing, Coalmont, Mt. Vernon, and Laager.

Tennessee Consolidated's coal preparation plant at Palmer was the most modern and extensive ever erected in Grundy County. In addition, the company built and operated the main store in the Palmer business district. There were also a post office and a theater downtown. William R. (Bob) Overturf was appointed the first postmaster when the post office was established there March 24, 1919. He previously had held the same position at nearby Tatesville. A fine mountain stone school eventually was built several blocks north of downtown Palmer.

Two other east Grundy locales came into existence with the opening of the mines at Palmer. One of these was Laager, located on the branch railroad due east of the Swiss Colony at Gruetli. The place originally was known as Henley's Switch. It gained this name, first, because there had been a switching track near where State Highway 108 crossed the old tracks until they were taken up in the 1970s. Secondly, the name Henley derived from the J. C. Henley general merchandise store near the switch. In those early days of the place, there was also a stave mill nearby on land which had been owned by Jackson Tate, who, with Mrs. Tate, operated a boarding house in the community. Other early set-



Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company's preparation plant at Palmer in boom times.

tlers were Dave Dykes, Porter Rankin, Harrison and George Ross, Tim Tate, and a Swiss settler named Laager.

When the time came for a post office to be established at this locale, J. C. Henley and a newcomer to the community, Marvin Henley, consulted about a name, then forwarded several suggestions to postal officials in Washington, D.C. Their choice was Laager, like nearby Gruetli, a name of Swiss origin. The Laager post office dates from September 16, 1920; it was housed in the Henley store, and Marvin Henley was the first postmaster. The first Laager School was opened to pupils in 1922. A recent development in this part of the county was the incorporation of the town of Laager-Gruetli in 1980.

Another community born of the opening of the east Grundy mines was Collins, known originally as Camp Four. The early name signified the fourth camp for the railroad workmen who laid the tracks from Coalmont to Palmer. Facilities at the camp included some houses, a dining hall, a commissary, and a well. When the railroad was completed, incoming families occupied the abandoned dwellings; Gordon Northcutt came and opened a general store in the commissary building. Local men built the Camp Four School in 1921, using lumber provided by John Holmes, a Norwegian who operated a nearby sawmill. Besides being employed at sawmilling, local workmen found jobs at a stave mill located along the narrow gauge dinkey railroad operated by Sam Werner.

The Camp Four community built a much improved school in 1932. This they named Collins School because older residents attested that creeks rising in the vicinity were the headwaters of Collins River. Though the school was closed in 1972 following consolidation of its pupils with those from Laager, Gruetli, and Mr. Vernon in the new Swiss Memorial School at Laager, the locale continues to bear the name Collins.

From War to War (1917–1945)

On September 21, 1917, an event took place in Tracy City which was being repeated in just about every southern town, sig-

naling the end of an era. Lasting the half century since the Civil War, this period had been one of relative peace and quiet for the South. The North in 1865 had broken the South's political power and destroyed its wealth; but, that accomplished, the North contented itself with exploiting southern raw materials for its burgeoning industrialism and had pretty much left off trying to reform the intractable, unreconstructable South. Until the Spanish-American War there had been no occasion for southern manhood to apply itself to war, which, including the Grundy County men who served with the Fourth Tennessee Volunteers, came forth readily enough in 1898. All in all, Mark Twain's characterization of an earlier period fit the South of 1865–1917 as well as any: "Everybody was poor but didn't know it, and everybody was comfortable and did know it." Compared with the rest of the nation, the South indeed was poorer and it was decidedly less powerful; even Yankees, however, acknowledged that it was pleasanter.

Now the South was to be channeled back into the mainstream, and the nation's entrance into "The Great War" marked the beginning of the process. Thus at the Tracy City depot that September morning in 1917, "21 of our brave young men," according to a local newspaper account, "bade friends and loved ones good-bye and left for Camp Gordon at Atlanta to train for military service in France." Among them were the incendiary newspaperman Clyde Newsom and Dr. Tom Roberts, a young dentist. Fortunately, all these young men came through the war, although Harris Patton of Pelham, who left October 5 with the next local contingent, died under arms, as did later recruits Henry Fults, Marion Dolph Hargis, George Kilgore, and Robert Tate. These names were memorialized on a marble stone raised at the Altamont courthouse in January of 1948. This marker also contains the names of the dead of subsequent wars—39 in World War II, five in the Korean Conflict, and eight in the Vietnam Conflict.

After the 19 months of U.S. belligerency, Grundy County learned that World War I had ended when the whistle at Werner's Tracy City sawmill blasted at 5:30 the morning of Novem-

ber 11, 1918, long before the usual summons to work. Soon the bells of the churches and Shook School were pealing, the tram whistle was blowing, and guns were being discharged. By ten o'clock a parade, headed by the community's few motor vehicles, followed by buggies, wagons, horseback riders, and walkers, was on its way to Coalmont, seven miles distant. There, several prominent citizens delivered impromptu speeches, and all raised their voices in song, rejoicing that it was "over, over there."

An occurrence in Tracy City of the 1910s—probably soon after the war—was the exodus for causes at present unknown of the black community. Called "Happy Bottom," it was situated behind the present post office and Chevrolet dealership. There were dwellings and a school and church, to which worshippers were summoned by beating on a wash tub. After the blacks left and the structures were torn down, the only Negroes in town lived in the premises of the families for whom they worked; the last of these departed in the 1950s. There had been 436 blacks in Grundy County in 1890; 39 families, most of them in Pelham Valley, were numbered in a relief survey as late as 1935. However, no blacks have lived in the county for about the last 25 years.

The 1920s in Grundy County were not the best of times, but neither were they the worst. Jobs were to be had, even if many of them were underground. Palmer, in particular, was in boom. Coalmont was thriving. Tracy City continued prosperous enough, though its mines had declined. Monteagle and Beersheba Springs filled each summer with their cottagers.

A town with a history of 57 years, Tracy City in 1915 finally decided to incorporate, mainly for the purpose of financing the operation of James K. Shook School. The first mayor was Dr. C. W. Hembree; aldermen were L. G. Henderson, George M. Thorogood, and Samuel Werner, Jr. These men also served as the Tracy City Board of Education, which by 1919 had given Shook a full 12-year course of study.

Alderman Werner also was operating what had become Tracy City's largest single business, the Sam Werner Lumber Company, founded by his father. Owning 15,000 acres of timber

lands and operating a bandsaw mill with an annual capacity of three million board feet of lumber, a planing mill, a finishing mill, a carpentry shop, and even a 10-mile dinkey railroad, the firm employed up to 75 men.

The government of Grundy County, meantime, was being headed by its first county judge, John Gallagher of Pelham, who first gained the office when it was established in 1917 and held it until 1934. The county has had just five chief executives since: Charles W. Smith of Altamont, 1934–1942; J. L. Rollings of Pelham and Altamont, 1942–1958; Malcolm Fults of Altamont, 1958–1965; W. C. Hixson of Hubbard's Cove, 1965–1966; and Roy Partin of Tracy City, 1966 to the present. (A 1978 statute changed Partin's title to county judge-executive and made the magistrates county commissioners.)

One of the lasting innovations of the 1920s was the Grundy County Fair. For years this annual event has been hosted by Tracy City, but it was launched Friday, September 19, 1924, at Summerfield, a community between Monteagle and Tracy City. Faculty members of the old Summerfield School took the lead in initiating the fair, but in the planning they obtained much help from the Extension Department of the University of Tennessee. D. O. Segrest, a state vocational agriculture teacher, organized and directed the first fair, which provided judging for farm, dairy, and poultry products, along with jellies and garments made by the women, who vied for one dollar prizes. This contemporary picture of the fair as a social event survives: "Under the grape arbor and beautiful pine tree were the soft drink, ice cream, candy, and sandwich stands, around which the young people buzzed like so many bees—except when called off to games. . . . The spirit of the day was contagious, as everyone was pleased and surprised at what was shown."

The last year of the 1920s was marred by a black event in the annals of Grundy County, to be followed six months later by a black day nationally which cast an ominous shadow over the locality's future. On Monday, April 15, 1929, dusk was settling in when Sheriff John Cline, a veteran lawman, observed a local man named Ernest O'Dear drunk in Tracy City and ordered him

to go home and stay there. Instead, O'Dear went home, got a shotgun, and came back downtown to Henry Thompson's pool-room on the town's notorious "Smoky Row," where many of Tracy City's 11 saloons had been located before prohibition days. It was not long before Sheriff Cline entered the establishment. He was greeted by O'Dear, armed and hostile. "Cline, I'm going to kill you," he said, just before discharging his shot gun. The blast struck Cline in the right arm. Vainly he tried to yank his revolver from its holster with his good left hand. O'Dear seized the weapon instead and unloaded five shots into the sheriff. One hit him in the forehead, killing him instantly. The slayer then started home along the railroad tracks, firing off his shotgun from time to time and terrorizing townspeople he encountered.



Sheriff John M. Cline, shown here in front of the Altamont courthouse, was murdered in the line of duty on April 25, 1929

Again, though, O'Dear did not remain home; when next he emerged he was ambushed and shot to death by three deputies who lay hidden beneath a railway coach. Fearing further trouble, the state sent a small detachment of National Guardsmen from Winchester. Perhaps these six men still were present when the two victims were buried 40 feet apart in City Cemetery. Oddly, Sheriff Cline's grave never has been marked, while a headstone identifies O'Dear's.

The black day nationally came about six months after Sheriff Cline's murder when, on Tuesday, October 29, the stock market crashed, a financial panic which presaged what historians have named "The Great Depression." The 1930s were for Grundy County the very worst of times economically. In fact, according to some indicators, few localities in the United States had it so bad. In December of 1935, for example, there were just 11 counties in the nation with a relief rate as high as 30 per cent. Grundy not only was one of these, but its relief rate at this time was running 60 per cent! Moreover, between November of 1933, and February of 1935, 72 per cent of the county population—then between nine and ten thousand—received relief for some period. In regard to the distribution of this relief, however, it should be pointed out that the monthly benefits for each case averaged just \$10.25, and that 84 per cent of it was work, and not direct relief. The federal agencies providing most of the work relief were the Works Progress Administration (WPA), Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and the Resettlement Administration.

The Grundy Countians hit hardest by the depression were the coal miners, then numbering about one-quarter of the total work force. The decline of this old industry in the Tracy City vicinity is evident in this telling statistic: in 1935, 92.8 per cent of persons residing in the Fifth Civil District, encompassing Tracy City, received some relief. One ameliorating factor for families whose money income had been reduced drastically was the fact that 65 per cent of relief families grew vegetable gardens and many kept livestock—cattle, hogs, and poultry. Consequently, difficult as life was for many, no one is known to have

starved. It might also be noted that few persons in Grundy County "drove to the poorhouse in an automobile," as Will Rogers had quipped, for only six per cent of those on relief owned a car.

One sign of the times locally was the CCC camp.¹ The 1475th Company of the Civilian Conservation Corps was organized June 22, 1933, when 200 enrollees assembled at Palmer. Two years later, on June 29, 1935, the company relocated at Tracy City, near the present American Legion Park. One CCC legacy is the chain of Grundy Lakes, used for swimming, boating, and fishing. CCC personnel also erected seven fire towers, built forest roads, and fought woodland fires.

On the night of Saturday, April 27, 1935, 80 men of the CCC were very much in evidence fighting the most destructive fire in the history of Grundy County. About ten o'clock a blaze of incendiary origin started in the rear of the handsome three-story frame Masonic building in the midst of the Tracy City business district. The fire spread quickly, shooting flames 50 feet skyward and leaping to adjacent structures. Before the CCC fire fighters succeeded in halting its spread, the conflagration had razed buildings valued at \$100,000. These included the Masonic building, which on its lower floors housed E. C. Norvell's funeral parlor and furniture store; the City Hotel (formerly the Tidman House hostelry); Lewis Hines' drug store and residence; the New York Store building; the Knights of Pythias building, occupied by the post office and L. E. Hassler's clothing store; Roy Wright's grocery; the Dixie Telephone offices; and the Oliver and Brawley shoe repair shop. Clyde C. Newsom, the alleged arsonist of prewar days, was arrested and charged with setting the fire. The venue of his trial was changed to Jasper where, despite his profession of innocence, he was convicted and sentenced, then reportedly given a suspended term on condition of leaving the state. By July 26, 1935, the cornerstone of a new brick Masonic building had been laid, but Tracy City's business district had suffered irreplaceable losses.

Early in the depression two young men came to Cumberland Mountain and established a school which was destined for al-

most a generation to be the focus of much controversy. In November of 1932, Myles Horton, a Tennessean, and Don West, a Georgian, founded Highlander Folk School at Summerfield, making use of a large house and property given for the purpose by Dr. Lillian Johnson, a professor at Memphis State Teachers College. The folk school idea had been borrowed from Scandinavian models, and the stated premise of the training at Highlander was that "American society could be made a true democracy through cooperation instead of competition." From the beginning, however, Highlander was a training school for Southern labor union organizers instigating confrontation. By 1933 Horton and West had set up the Cumberland Mountain Workers' League, which supported a strike among woodcutters. Soon after, Myles' wife, Zilphia Horton, a musician, was leading strikers on the picket lines around textile mills in the singing of "We Shall Not Be Moved." Beginning in 1937, the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations) used Highlander for its "Dixie Drive," and over the next ten years 6900 workers and labor education leaders for this effort reportedly were prepared at the Summerfield school.

Meanwhile, the Highlander leaders had begun also to take an active interest in Grundy County politics. For this purpose they launched the Grundy County Political Conference in 1938 and claimed credit that same year for getting Roy Thomas elected sheriff. Such activities inevitably produced a local reaction, and in 1940 an anti-Highlander organization was formed called the Grundy County Crusaders. C. H. Kilby, an employee of Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company, was at the forefront of the Crusaders and worked indefatigably against what he and many other Grundy Countians saw as a "leftist," or even communist, school. In the 1930s, however, Highlander enjoyed the endorsement of such national figures as theologian Reinhold Niebuhr and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who visited the school after World War II.

Another sign of the local political reaction to the politics of the New Deal era may be seen in the sudden closing of the extensive Werner lumber and woodworking enterprises, called

"the most important establishment of its kind within a radius of 75 miles of Tracy City." Like other independent businessmen of his time, Sam Werner resented such New Deal intrusions upon the prerogatives of ownership as the NRA (National Recovery Administration) codes. The last straw for Werner reportedly was Roosevelt's landslide reelection in 1936, promising more of the same. Upon that event he blew his quitting whistle for the last time and closed forever the industry which at the time was Tracy City's single largest employer. The loss in local lumber production may be gauged from the fact that 11 years later the total output of 39 sawmills in the county was just one-sixth the Werner capacity.

Little has been said of the resort at Beersheba Springs since the days of John Armfield. Following the Civil War "shipwreck," the hotel had been passing every decade or so to new management, none of whom could afford the accommodations and entertainments of the spa in its heyday. In place of a French band, for example, guests during one period were pleased to settle for fiddler Luther Ewing and his son Courtney, who played the harp. Owners in the twentieth century have included Mrs. Louise Means and her daughter Miss Mary Means, Mr. and Mrs. John Mears, and finally Miss Nell Farrar of Tullahoma. The last owner sold the hotel in 1941 to the Methodists, and for the last 40 years it has been the Methodist Assembly. Despite these changes a knot of cottage families has continued through generations to favor their beloved Beersheba. Notable are the Adams and Howell families of Nashville, who have been cottagers for more than a century.

Grundy County, with the rest of the nation, went to war again after Pearl Harbor, a catastrophe of which Carl W. Sitz of Tracy City was an eyewitness. It is evident from the number of local casualties and the war bond effort that World War II extracted a far heavier investment of blood and treasure than had been required in 1917-18. Fittingly, Dr. W. T. (Tom) Roberts, decorated for service in France during the earlier war and first commander of the Tracy City American Legion post (founded March 12, 1920), was chairman of the Grundy County Selective

Service Board when the first call for draftees was issued. Of the hundreds of county men who served in all theaters, 39 died under arms. On the home front a Citizens' Defense Corps was appointed to awaken Grundians to the fact that "America is in a total war and nothing less than an all-out effort can bring to the Allies a total and complete victory." C. H. Kilby was chairman of this corps; E. J. Cunningham, superintendent of education, was commander; and James E. Cheek, Tracy City druggist, acted as chief air raid warden. All citizens tolerated the inconveniences of rationing, and many women did their part working at the Red Cross surgical dressing room.

Recent Times (1946–1980)

Since World War II another generation in the life of mankind has passed. It is a period which has been marked, in particular, by great social change—a movement of events so rapid, and experienced as so beyond the power of local control, as to produce an unusual degree of discontinuity between past and present. This development has led some philosophers of history to the view that mankind has entered upon a "post-modern" epoch. Certainly American life seems more and more unrooted, superficial, and characterless; even a community like Grundy County, with its own recognizable history and tradition, has been affected profoundly by the times.

Among the carriers of the seeds of change were the men returning in 1945–46 from military service. There was rejoicing as each one came home, but it was not until May of 1946, that the county was ready with a formal program welcoming its veterans and setting forth their postwar opportunities. By October the draft had been suspended, not to be revived until July of 1950, after the start of the Korean Conflict. However, Grundy Countians continued to be reminded of the sacrifice of war, for in 1947 the remains of the war dead began to be returned for local burial, and continued to arrive till 1949. And then, not a year passed before reports began to arrive of fresh casualties. In August of 1950, Sergeant Hershel Tate of Tracy City, learned

subsequently to have died in a POW camp, was reported missing in Korea, and in October Corporal William C. Northcutt of Altamont was reported killed there.

The veterans who came home in 1945 found that Tracy City had reincorporated. School needs had led to the first corporation in 1915, water needs to the second. No longer able to obtain a dependable water supply from the shut-down Werner Lumber Company, residents formed a water cooperative, an object linked with reincorporation. Senator John H. Marable and Representative W. C. Abernathy, Tracy City attorneys serving in the General Assembly, drafted the new charter. Jesse Hoosier, popular NC&StL station agent, then was elected in 1945 to the first of his eight terms as mayor; while the first aldermen were F. C. Abraham (reelected to 1956), F. C. Baggenstoss (reelected to 1960), C. W. Hale, and Ward Wray. Following his death in 1960, Mayor Hoosier was succeeded by W. Kenneth Jones, who also died in office; then by Fritz S. Flury, who served five terms (1962–1972); and by Carl W. Crisp and Mike Jordan, who held the position alternately from 1972 to 1980. In seeking reelection, Tracy City's first councilmen boasted of new street lights, which had been turned on in March of 1947. A new water system, which was operated by the Tracy City Water Board, was not in operation until 1955. It supplied the town from two 75,000-gallon tanks, one on Hobbs Hill and one on the high school hill.

Postwar endeavors also are to be associated with the Tracy City Commercial Club. One of its members, George Reynolds of Sewanee, launched Camp Mountain Lake in 1947. A summer camp for boys on Grundy Lakes, it has been directed in recent years by Horace Moore, Jr. Under the leadership of H. E. Baggenstoss, the Commercial Club also cooperated in staging the Tennessee Forest Festival, an annual event for 20 years, starting in October of 1949, when Senator Estes Kefauver gave the main address. Another member, C. W. Hale, was instrumental in establishing the broiler-growing industry in Grundy County. He began early in 1953 to arouse the interest of mountain farmers in raising chickens to supplement their incomes, and by the same fall Lonnie Bone had raised and marketed the county's first



Tracy City business district (post-World War II), having been rebuilt after the fire of 1935

grow-out. In the meantime, the Farmers Home Administration has financed many local broiler houses. In 1959, the Dixie Grain Company of Shelbyville leased the W. J. Jossi store from which to supply feed to growers; in the mid-1960s it built a large mill in Tracy City.

Tracy City was not the only town to reincorporate after 1945. In June of 1955, Palmer reactivated its charter and elected Albert Nunley mayor. Beersheba Springs, its 1839 charter making it the county's first town, also voted in June of 1955 to reincorporate; Glenn Killian soon after became the first chairman of the Beersheba Board of Commissioners. Coalmont incorporated in April of 1957, and its mayors since have included J. S. Dyer, Jesse Jones, and Lewis Meeks.

There were also sporadic efforts in Monteagle to incorporate. As early as April of 1948 druggist Ward Lacy headed a meeting on the subject, but it was 1955 before preliminary legal steps were taken. Arguing as had Tracy Citians that the community must incorporate in order to develop a water system, sponsors persuaded the Grundy County Quarterly Court to repeal the act abolishing an earlier Monteagle charter. Then they

had State Senator Malcolm A. Fults of Altamont sponsor a bill incorporating that part of the town lying in Grundy County. However, influential persons countered with "strong objections," and the bill was withdrawn. It would be March of 1960 before a group called the Citizens' Committee for Monteagle would renew the push for incorporation. In the meantime, the influential Mountain Lions Club had been organized in 1958 to provide leadership for Monteagle. Its first officers were J. E. Walker, Jr., president, and Franklin Taylor, vice-president.

A series of disasters struck Monteagle early in the postwar period. In December of 1948 fire swept through five structures of the Sunday School Assembly, including revered Warren Hall and the Women's Building. On the night of February 28, 1950, the widely famous Monteagle Hotel, located adjacent to the Assembly, burned to the ground. (The 68-year-old Assembly Inn was to go down in flames in November of 1961.) Then, on February 13, 1952, the tornado mentioned earlier struck and damaged structures both in the Assembly and at nearby Summerfield.

Later in the decade destructive fires occurred in Beersheba Springs and Pelham. A midnight blaze in May of 1957 consumed five buildings at Beersheba. Among these was the B. M. Brown and Son Grocery, which in 1920 B. Marvin Brown had bought from Tom and Jim Northcutt, grandsons of famed Adrian Northcutt and in their own right widely known north Grundy merchants. Since Brown's death in 1936, his son Dennis had operated the store. Pelham's most destructive fire occurred Christmas Eve of 1958. The blaze started in Alf and Jim Sartain's Pelham Farm Supply store and spread to the Masonic building, which housed the Hamby Store, and to two lesser structures. The stores were a favorite meeting place of valley farmers.

The postwar years required many novel decisions of the Grundy County Quarterly Court, a body always dominated by conservative farmers. An anecdote taken from the proceedings of an early 1950 session displays the traditional habit of mind which made it always so much more likely that, dealing with a new issue, the court would conclude to wait and see rather than risk the consequences of acting in haste. Sheriff Jim Meeks had

reported to the justices of the peace that the roof of the Tracy City courthouse was in dangerous condition owing to continuous leaking. They instructed him to keep catching the water in buckets till an appropriation could be made at their next term of court. At that same moment the magistrates themselves were in distress from a down draft blowing smoke into the Altamont courtroom. However, when it was suggested that the hole be plugged, Judge J. L. Rollings shrugged and observed that the wind would shift in a few minutes anyway—probably an accurate forecast, considering the changeableness of January weather on the mountain.

In 1947 the court had tried to thwart the aim of the State Highway Department to build a road from Pelham to Monteagle along a new right-of-way. Instead, it called for an all-Grundy route from Pelham to Tracy City, and thence to Jasper. This road never came to be, but a new 16-mile highway (State 150) was built from Tracy City to Jasper in 1949.

The issue of a county hospital agitated residents in 1951–52, and the court simply decided to hand this question to the voters, who overwhelmingly approved bonds for the project. However, they never could compromise on a dispute over the location of a county hospital—one faction wanting it near Tracy City and another near the junction of Highways 56 and 108 at Coalmont; this unresolvable issue killed the proposition.

The smouldering controversy regarding Highlander Folk School flamed anew in the 1950s, and by the end of the decade, legal proceedings had abolished it. Highlander gained notoriety in 1954 when Myles Horton and Dr. James Dombrowski, an associate of the school, were subpoenaed before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee holding hearings in New Orleans. Horton was removed from the courtroom there when he tried to read a statement about Dombrowski. By 1958 the Hamilton County Chapter of the American Legion was calling for a probe into Highlander; in February of 1959 a joint resolution of the Tennessee General Assembly urged the same. Then state and county lawmen raided the school on July 31, 1959, arresting four persons and confiscating a quantity of liquor, after which

the place was ordered “padlocked.” The next February Circuit Judge C. C. Chattin ruled that Highlander had violated criminal laws by selling beer without a license, violated the existing segregation laws, and used its funds for the private gain of Horton. Dr. Johnson’s deed of the place thereupon was set aside, a receiver of the property appointed, and the school charter revoked. Appeals all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court were to no avail. On December 16, 1961, Highlander personal property was auctioned, a sale “which began in the barn and ended in the library”; and in July of 1962 its real estate also was sold under court order. A training center for Southern labor organizers at its inception in the 1930s, Highlander Folk School in its last years similarly was in the vanguard of the civil rights movement. Leaders of nonviolent demonstrations of the late 1950s and early 1960s, including Martin Luther King, Jr., were trained at Highlander.

Postwar change and hard times in the coal fields of southeast Tennessee brought Grundy County notoriety once again as a place of labor violence and bloodshed. A 15-year train of events reached a sanguinary and destructive climax early in the 1960s. First, there was a decline nationally in the demand for coal. Overproduction idled miners of the Palmer area in the fall of 1948, and the next summer John L. Lewis decreed a three-day work week. Then came technological change. In June of 1950 Tennessee Consolidated closed the old mines at Palmer and opened its new all-mechanized Bear Pen mines. Early in 1954 it introduced the Miller auger-type cutting machine, further reducing the need for pick labor. By the fall of 1955 TCC was working just 150 men, who were getting out about 1500 tons a day. Nearby at Whitwell, Tennessee Products and Chemical Corporation was working 225 men, producing 2300 tons. Moreover, production was becoming geared to contracts supplying TVA steam-generating plants. In June of 1957 the two firms just mentioned had pacts with TVA totaling 5000 tons a week and prospects for a 10-year agreement calling for 6000 tons.

In the meantime, a century after the first coal shafts had been sunk into Cumberland Mountain, a new breed of operators had

arrived and begun surface mining—stripping the beautiful forest land and leaving ugly spoil banks. Strippers first began to appear in the Freemont vicinity near Coalmont early in the 1950s. By the summer of 1957, the Serodino Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, had begun operations near Sanders Crossing School. In behalf of the pupils, the *Grundy County Herald* lamented, “Never again will the school children run up and down the green hill behind the school, for the tree-covered hill is no more.” Unmoved, Serodino had worked its way to the foot of Hobbs Hill by year’s end.

When violence came, however, it mostly involved underground miners and the companies they worked for. It erupted in the summer of 1960 and continued for more than three years. In the words of a shocked *Tennessean* reporter who visited the town early in 1964, it left Palmer looking like “a World War II movie set.” The disputants were the United Mine Workers and members of its Local 5881 on the one side and Tennessee Consolidated and independent coal operators in Grundy and neighboring counties on the other side. The latter maintained that not only was it impossible to operate profitably under the UMW’s 1958 national protective wage clause, but also that the clause was illegal under antitrust laws—an argument that federal courts in a series of suits often upheld. Conflict was triggered when the companies refused to negotiate new contracts with the UMW and began hiring miners organized by the Southern Labor Union, which recently had appeared on the local scene.

In June of 1960 employees of Ramsey Coal Company, a Monteagle firm, voted to join the SLU, and in August the union organized Local 114 in the county. Within days there was conflict. Eighteen non-UMW miners trying to enter a mine operated by Grundy Mining Company, a subsidiary of TCC, were stopped by about 100 men, many of them armed with shotguns. Later courtroom testimony said the would-be miners were warned to leave or be killed and then were harried from the mine by shotgun blasts. An SLU organizer was beaten in the presence of two UMW officials.

Destruction of property began a year later. On August 7,

1961, TCC's powder magazine at Coal Valley was dynamited, the loss estimated at \$100,000. The following February the dwellings of two mine foremen were dynamited, the TCC warehouse burned to the ground, and the company office damaged by explosives—all occurrences in Palmer. As spring melted into summer, blood began to be shed. In May a nonunion miner was wounded, in June a tippie guard and an explosives company executive shot to death, and in July a UMW miner slain. Then there was more dynamiting: the company store, power poles, a filling station, and the Palmer post office were all targets. By the time the *Tennessean* reporter made his trip to Palmer, TCC was estimating damage to its property alone at \$300,000.

These disturbances of the early 1960s virtually finished off the century-old coal industry of Grundy County. Thereafter, Tennessee Consolidated completed a process already begun of moving its mining operations into Marion County. In 1967 the company sold its property in downtown Palmer, and in 1969 it moved its offices from Tracy City to Jasper. Three years later the L&N Railroad, which had acquired the NC&StL in 1958, concluded that Palmer's coal days were over and took up the rails which had been laid from Coalmont in 1917. In the meantime, the little coal which has been extracted in Grundy County has been mined mostly by strippers.

Desperate for jobs to replace those being lost by the faltering coal industry, the Grundy County Quarterly Court in 1959 approved an issue of \$200,000 in industrial bonds to build a factory in Altamont for the Colonial Shirt Company. This plant, employing mostly women at minimum wages, opened in 1960. Bonds for a Colonial plant in Tracy City were approved two years later, and a factory employing 100 workers was in operation by October of 1962. In August of 1963 Colonial announced that its annual payroll at Altamont was running about \$1 million and at Tracy City \$600,000.

During Palmer's ordeal one place in Grundy County was engaged in more constructive endeavors. Overriding opposition from the Marion Countians in their midst, citizens of Monteagle finally voted to incorporate in June of 1962, the margin in favor

of the proposition being 223 to 124. In August grocer W. H. Templeton was elected the first mayor; Grady Crownover, who served till his death in 1968, and Judson Glass were chosen aldermen. The new city fathers immediately began working for a system of water filtration and distribution. However, it required 13 years to obtain the financing and then to build a lake for water supply, a plant for treatment, and lines for transmission. These facilities were built at a cost of \$2.3 million, the funds having been obtained through grants from the Economic Development Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency and loans from the Farmers Home Administration. The new system was dedicated on August 30, 1975.

In the meantime, other important developments had taken place in Monteagle. After being reelected, Templeton resigned in 1965 and was succeeded by J. E. (Ernie) Walker, Jr., the director of DuBose Conference Center. Walker was reelected twice, then defeated by Douglas J. Campbell, a retired Army officer, who was mayor from 1970 to 1974. Walker regained the office in 1974 and served two more terms before retiring in 1978.

For six years after the opening in February of 1962 of the segment of Interstate 24 which ascends the mountain from the north between Betsy Willis Creek and Monteagle, and which diverted through traffic away from the Pelham Valley, Monteagle itself had escaped a similar fate. Southbound vehicles had to exit at Monteagle and pass through town using U.S. 41, which also funneled northbound traffic through town. In February and March of 1968, however, both northbound and southbound lanes of I-24 were opened, causing Monteagle to be bypassed altogether. Businesses depending on tourism suffered an immediate and a severe decline in trade. A Holiday Inn motel which had been built at the original I-24 exit in 1966 continued to flourish, but restaurants and filling stations were hard hit and some closed. Seeking a means of rebuilding their town's tourist appeal, citizens in 1971 formed the Monteagle Development Corporation, which undertook an "Operation Facelift" making use of a "rustic mountain" theme. It was, however, the sheer vol-

ume of interstate traffic which eventually enabled businesses to make a substantial recovery. The most significant recent development in Monteagle has been the construction by the Seventh-day Adventists of a 124-bed nursing home across from DuBose Conference Center.

One area of Grundy County was able to complete its water project more expeditiously than Monteagle. In November of 1962 the Big Creek Utility District, which had been formed to serve patrons in the vicinity of the highway junction at Coal-mont, obtained a \$640,000 grant from the Housing and Home Finance Agency. Work began the following year on an impoundment of Ranger Creek, and by September 1964 the \$1.4 million project was completed and water was being supplied to subscribers.

Any history of Grundy County which failed to take note of local sports would be omitting a central preoccupation of many residents. In the early 1960s—hard times economically—the county took especial pride in its most successful football team. The 1963 Grundy County High School squad, coached by Edd Cantrell and Hollie Brown, won 10 games, including the Industrial Bowl, and suffered just one loss. At about the same time Kenneth Fults was earning Little All-America honors while playing fullback at Tennessee Tech—one of more than a dozen local gridgers who have played in the college ranks. A current collegian (1978–1981) is Jerry Bryant at Austin Peay, who holds the Grundy County High School rushing record. Two Grundy County natives have become head collegiate coaches—Charlie Tate at the University of Miami (Florida) in 1964–1970 and Horace Moore, the current Sewanee coach. The high school teams have been inspired during several eras, the first starting in 1949, by marching bands. The most successful of these performed in the Sugar Bowl parade December 30, 1970, under the direction of Rex Tate. Though not noted as a basketball school, GCHS in recent years has sent its girls' team to the state tournament. Possibly its most outstanding individual player was Joe Malone, who set the school scoring records in 1960–61 and went on to play baseball at Tennessee Tech. Basketball is more popular at the elementary school level, and a coach at Altamont

School compiled a spectacular record. James L. (Petie) Baker's teams in 1968–1973 won 96 consecutive games. For years Grundy towns—Tracy City, Palmer, Coalmont, Monteagle, and Pelham—fielded baseball teams which played in either the Sequatchie Valley Baseball League or the Mountain Valley League. As early as the nineteenth century, Tracy City teams were playing on the old mule lot field across from Shook School, and began to use what became American Legion Field on July 4, 1908. A major league pitcher, “Shufflin’ Phil” Douglas, married a Tracy City girl and is buried in City Cemetery. However, the most celebrated of all local athletes is Hershel Anderson of Tracy City. While serving in the U.S. Army, he became a pistol marksman nonpareil, setting numerous national records, representing his country in the Olympic Games of 1972 and 1976, and winning four gold medals and two silver at the 1975 Pan American Games, among countless other achievements. He was the Tennessee Amateur Athlete of the Year in 1975.

There were promising boys—some of them members of athletic teams—who no sooner finished high school in the mid-1960s than they became involved in stripping cars. There was almost nothing gainful for youths to do locally, and some gravitated into this illicit traffic. Stealing cars in places like Chattanooga, driving them to such remote spots as “Boogerland” near Gruetli, and stripping them of parts which could be sold easily presented a complex law enforcement problem of the 1964–1971 period.

During the same period President Johnson’s “war on poverty” program was leaving a few marks for good on the county. The first Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) subcenter was established locally at Tracy City in September of 1966. Working out of this office, Mrs. Ethel Arbuckle was instrumental in achieving the construction of Hillcrest Village, a project begun in November of 1969 and financed with loans from FHA. It now has grown to a 32-unit apartment complex which provides low-rent housing for the elderly, who also have a multipurpose center to serve their needs. Additional units have been built in recent years on the former Kunz property across from the high

school, and HUD completed in 1980 a low-rent housing project at Summerfield.

In the last years of the 1960s the County Court, presided over by Judge Roy Partin, had its hands full complying with court-mandated programs of property revaluation and political reapportionment. Magistrates approved a plan for remapping the county and revaluing real property in July of 1967, and the following year began to study the sticky problem of reapportionment. Up till then the county's eight civil districts were geographical divisions and certainly did not comply with the Supreme Court's "one-man, one-vote" edict. Amazingly, though, by January of 1970 the court approved a plan which called for reducing the number of divisions to seven, changing the old civil districts to equally populous magisterial districts, and cutting the number of magistrates from 22 to 15. The court was reconstituted in accordance with this plan by the general election in August of 1971. That same year the court approved a plan requiring the popular election of school board members, one from each magisterial district. The first such board took office in September of 1972. During these years the county also built a new public edifice at Altamont. The Grundy County Health Department building was ready for occupancy in September of 1969.

In politics, 1968 was an unprecedented year in the history of Grundy County. The reason was that the presidential nominee of the Democrats failed to carry the county; Hubert Humphrey garnered just 37 per cent of the vote to 46 per cent for American Party candidate George Wallace. The Democrat bolt in 1972 was even more striking, for the Republican nominee himself, Richard Nixon, defeated Democrat George McGovern 55 to 40 per cent. Previous to these two elections, the Democrats had almost totally dominated local political preferences. Only in the post-Civil War election of 1868 when there were a mere 47 voters (there had been 505 in 1860) had a candidate other than the Democrat carried the county. As soon as the full electorate was able to vote again in 1876 Grundy County returned to a more typical pattern, giving 90 per cent of its total to Democrat Samuel J. Tilden. Similarly, in the twentieth century Franklin

Roosevelt polled 86 per cent in 1936 and Lyndon Johnson 80 per cent in 1964. Even the Roman Catholic Al Smith gained 61 per cent of an overwhelmingly Protestant electorate when he ran in 1928. The same pattern has prevailed in gubernatorial elections. The only Republican to win was Alf Taylor back in 1920, who somehow outpolled Albert H. Roberts, the incumbent Democrat, 47 to 43 per cent. The 1970 election was more typical of recent times. Democrat John J. Hooker, the loser statewide, outpolled Republican Winfield Dunn by 72 to 25 per cent. Grundy County, then, is and almost always has been solidly Democrat in its politics.

The Shape of the Future

By the beginning of the 1980s, the white man's era on Cumberland Mountain had passed 160 years in duration, if the start be marked from 1819 when Calhoun's Treaty was negotiated between the U.S. government and the Cherokee. Ironically, though, the future of Grundy County at this juncture seems to lie more with the legacy which the Indians, under duress, bequeathed the white man—that is, with the treasury of nature—than with the puny changes that have been inflicted upon it in the meantime. There had been a time—and not long ago—when persons interested in the history of Grundy County urged the preservation of buildings linked with the local past. But they learned that these were but a night's work for any destroyer with a match. Thus in Tracy City, what the fire of 1935 did not consume, individual arsons in the 1970s did. The old depot was burned in August of 1971; the Tennessee Consolidated offices and company store burned in December of 1972; the Dixie Theater (where a generation of Grundy Countians had seen their "picture shows" from the early 1920s until it closed in 1958) was destroyed in January of 1976; and Shook School was razed in May, 1976. Then the old Colyar House, which had been used for the Tracy City branch courthouse and was being used as its city hall, was dynamited off its foundations in January of 1977, and later demolished. Moreover, every time one of the hand-

some wood Victorian dwellings going back to E. O. Nathurst's day fell into decay, there would be five FHA brick boxes built to take its place. Only a few of the landmark residences remain.

The story is much the same elsewhere. In Monteagle just the Assembly cottages survive; in Altamont, the courthouse, the old jail (seemingly doomed to decay or demolition despite being on the National Register) still survive, along with Northcutt's house and store; and in Beersheba Springs, the hotel and antebellum cottages still remain. Even if mere tinder to some, these are all surviving reminders of their community's history which responsible persons hope will last for a long time yet. Their hope now, though, is buoyed by the knowledge that an older heritage abides and that every effort is being bent to preserve it.

The story of the South Cumberland Recreation Area, which looms so large in any future perspective of Grundy County, begins perhaps with the January session of Quarterly Court in 1967. Forming a Conservation Board seemed that day like a small piece of business; it proved to be one of the most far-reaching ever. Appointed to serve on this board were H. E. Baggenstoss (chairman), Wade Bouldin, W. C. Hixson, W. E. Levan, and J. E. Walker. The group was a worthy one, and its chairman in particular was no run-of-the-mill court appointee. Herman Baggenstoss was a forester, a conservationist, and an outdoor writer with wide contacts and experience; he also was a man with a vision for the future of his native county. Though already of retirement age, he worked indefatigably the next dozen years, applying pressure to gain approval for those things which would realize this vision, blocking those which threatened it.

A great milestone was reached July 6, 1972, when Baggenstoss chaired a meeting at the Sewanee Inn where TVA and the Tennessee Department of Conservation announced their joint plan for the development of what had been named the South Cumberland Recreation Area. It was a plan first outlined at meetings September 24–25, 1970, by the Grundy County Conservation Board for representatives of local, state, and federal agencies. The board subsequently whetted the interest of TVA in the plan by taking Lynn Seeber, its general manager, on a tour

of the proposed natural areas. It did the same with the state by taking Governor Winfield Dunn on a trip into Savage Gulf. A great primeval forest of virgin hardwoods, mostly owned by the Werners and preserved by their abrupt withdrawal from the lumber business in the 1930s, the Savage had become a fond object of conservationists, in part through the efforts of the Savage Gulf Preservation League. The SCRA plan included outdoor attractions in Franklin and Marion counties, but the focus would be Grundy County. There the management center was to be located; there also developments were planned for the Savage Wilderness and Stone Door Park near Beersheba Springs, a strip-mined reclamation site near Coalmont, and Grundy Lakes and Grundy State Park at Tracy City.

Events moved swiftly during the rest of the 1970s. Before 1972 was out the state and TVA had pledged funds for the purchase of the Savage, which already had been designated a natural landmark in the registry of the U.S. Department of the Interior. The first SCRA administrator, Steve Trussler, was appointed in June of 1974. Soon after, actual purchase of Savage Gulf began. The tract eventually encompassed over 10,000 acres, purchased at a cost of about \$2.5 million.

The appointment of H. F. (Hank) Landers, first as job supervisor in 1975 and later as successor to Trussler, was an important one, for he proved to be effective in transforming the vision of Herman Baggenstoss into a reality. Under Landers' supervision in the next five years these projects were completed: 1) the 13-mile Fiery Gizzard Trail between Grundy State Forest and Foster Falls in Marion County, 2) an 18-mile North Plateau Trail into Savage Gulf and two campsites there, 3) a general cleanup of Grundy Lakes and the building of beaches and docks and a loop trail there, 4) two loop trails at the Great Stone Door Environmental Education Area and a rustic center for visitors, and 5) a cleaning of the channel of the Collins Scenic River.

In the meantime, the Mountain Recreation Center property between Monteagle and Tracy City had been acquired to serve as headquarters for the SCRA. At this juncture Landers stepped aside, and Robert Richards was appointed project manager.

Other state personnel by 1980 included four rangers. Throughout the period in which the South Cumberland Recreation Area was being developed, Herman Baggenstoss served as chairman of the SCRA Commission—the liaison for TVA, the State Department of Conservation, and the conservation boards of the three participating counties.

Nor was the SCRA the only recreation development in Grundy County during the 1970s. After having bought the 2850-acre Skymont Hunting Preserve west of Altamont in September 1968, the Cherokee Area Boy Scout Council proceeded to develop its Camp Skymont. The Scouts built a dining hall, trading post, and other facilities before opening their camp in June of 1973 and dedicating it the next month.

Moreover, Grundy County was becoming noted for its arts and crafts fairs. The oldest of these is the Monteagle Mountain Market, an annual weekend event in August since 1960. By 1972 it had reached a peak of 236 exhibitors and 8000 visitors. Beer-sheba Springs launched its fall home tour and market in 1967, and Tracy City followed with its first Mountaineer Days Celebration in October 1970.

After decades of decline and fluctuation, the population of Grundy County had increased to a record 13,559 by the census of 1980. Many of this number do not find their gainful employment in the county. They enjoy the Cumberland Mountain as a place to live but commute to jobs in such places as McMinnville, Tullahoma, Winchester, and even Chattanooga, using I-24 to reach this city in about 45 minutes.

The present certainly marks the beginning of a new era for Grundy County, Tennessee. Ranged over for millennia by the old Indian tribes, who were represented by the Chickamauga when the first white men arrived in 1794 on their Nickajack Expedition, the place since has been farmed and mined and cut over; but it has endured and remains an inviting spot on earth to be one of the homes of mankind.

Appendices

A. Official Census Figures

1850	2773	1890	6345	1930	9717	1970	10,631
1860	3093	1900	7802	1940	11,552	1980	13,559
1870	3250	1910	8322	1950	12,558		
1880	4592	1920	9753	1960	11,512		

B. County Judges

John Gallagher, 1917-1934	W. C. Hixson, 1965-1966
Charles W. Smith, 1934-1942	Roy E. Partin, 1966-
J. L. Rollings, 1942-1958	(Judge-executive since 1978)
Malcolm A. Fults, 1958-1965	

C. Sheriffs Since 1918

Gillie Griswold, 1918-1920	J. M. (Jim) Meeks, 1948-1952
I. M. (Ike) Sartain, 1920-1926	Philip H. McGovern, 1952-1953
John Cline, 1926-1929	Elston Clay, 1953-1960
Graham Cline, 1929-1930	J. M. (Jim) Meeks, 1960-1966
Philip H. McGovern, 1930-1936	Lewie Winton, 1966-1970
J. L. McGovern, 1936-1938	Henry Morrison, 1970-1972
Roy B. Thomas, 1938-1940	Lewie Winton, 1972-1976
Philip H. McGovern, 1940-1946	Billy Gene Reid, 1976-
Dave F. Grooms, 1946-1948	

D. County Notables

State Legislators

Adrien Northcut—House, 1845-1849; Senate, 1849-1851, 1853-1855
Riley Bradford Roberts—House, 1857-1859
Isaac C. Garretson—House (Confederate), 1861-1863
Lawson Hill Northcutt—House, 1883-1885
Augustus Henry Woodlee—Senate, 1891-1893
John Hamilton Gunn—House, 1891-1893; Senate 1897-1899
Levi Vernon Woodlee—House, 1897-1899; Senate, 1905-1907
Jackson Venus Walker—Senate, 1913-1915
Ernest Campbell Norvell—House, 1917-1925
Thomas J. King—Senate, 1921-1923
William Clayton Abernathy—Senate, 1929-1931; House, 1945-1947
Jefferson Davis Fults—Senate, 1937-1939
John Hartwell Marable V—Senate, 1945-1947
Malcolm A. Fults—Senate, 1955-1957; House, 1957-1959

Chancellor

Glenn W. Woodlee, 12th Chancery Division, 1947-1969

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About the Author

James Lawrence Nicholson III was born December 28, 1934, in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, the first of two sons of J. L. (Jack) Nicholson, Jr. and the former Charline Frances Thomasson. After attending UCLA and Los Angeles City College, he earned a BA degree in history, which was awarded with high honor by Los Angeles State College in 1956; in the same year he was nominated for a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship by the Department of History. Mr. Nicholson taught four years in California elementary schools before returning to the South. He then entered Vanderbilt University as a graduate student, studying history under Dewey Grantham and Henry Lee Swint and English under Donald Davidson and Randall Stewart. He received a Master of Arts in Teaching degree in 1961. Mr. Nicholson taught at Montgomery Bell Academy in Nashville and was chairman of the English Department at Sewanee Military Academy. In Sewanee he also was an acquisitions assistant at the Jessie Ball duPont Library, editorial assistant for the *Sewanee Review* during the editorship of Andrew Lytle, and principal of the Sewanee Public School. In 1966 he purchased the *Grundy County Herald* in Tracy City and remained associated with this weekly newspaper until 1977. During this period the *Herald* was designated a National Blue Ribbon Paper by the National Editorial Foundation and received 33 press awards from the Tennessee Press Association. Seven of these were first places—for greatest improvement, best editorials, best single editorial, and best single feature. Mr. Nicholson is the author of *Views from the Mountain*, a collection of his newspaper columns; and the editor of and major contributor to “Grundy County, 1844–1976” and “Grundy County, 1946–1960: A Chronology.” He resides now in Richmond, Kentucky, and teaches American history, American literature, and journalism at Lincoln County High School in Stanford. He is married to the former Mary Virginia Crisler of Roanoke, Alabama, and is the father of four children and three stepchildren.